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# The Modern Language Journal

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All communications for the editors, books for review, and manuscripts should be addressed to Henri C. Olliger, Managing Editor, New York University, Washington Square East, New York 3, N. Y.

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LINDQUIST, LILLY—Director of Foreign Languages, Language Education Department, Division of Instruction, Detroit Public Schools. Distinguished educator and prominent supervisor in the field of foreign languages and their place in the curriculum. Has held many important offices in the NFMLT and the AATF.

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LECOQ, J. P.—Professor of French at Drake Univ. Is a frequent contributor of articles not only on French literature but on the techniques of the teaching of grammar. Distinguished scholar in his field.

SNOW, FRANK E.—Member of the Modern Language Dept. of Mississippi State College. A specialist in Spanish and contributor of valuable and original articles on the improvement of techniques in the Spanish field.

CERONI, VITTORIO—See January 1944 issue.

KAULFERS, WALTER V.—Associate professor of Comparative Education and Foreign Language Teaching, Stanford University. Author of *Modern Languages for Modern Schools, A Cultural Basis for the Language Arts*, and of over 275 articles and monographs on foreign-language teaching, secondary education and achievement testing.

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RENALDO, RENATO—Born and brought up in Mexico. A.B., A.M., Ph.D. (Univ. of Illinois). Was Editor for Mexico of the now defunct *Amigos*. Former Instructor of Spanish at Chanute Field, Rantoul, Illinois, while on leave from U. of Illinois. At present teaching an ASTP language and area group in addition to civilian classes.

JACQUES, AGNES—A.M. (Columbia Univ.) Teacher of Russian for past ten years, chiefly at University College, U. of Chicago. At present instructor in German and Russian at Illinois Institute of Technology. The

material used in the article published in this issue will be published under title of *Russian Primer* by Packard & Co., Chicago.

SAYLES, THOMAS EDWARD—Member of the English Department, Teaneck High School, Teaneck, N. J.

DEAN, RUTH J.—A.B. (Wellesley); A.M., D.Phil. (Oxford) Lectrice d'anglais, Faculté des Lettres, Université de Lyon; Instructor and Assist. Prof. of French at Mount Holyoke College. On leave at present time. Director of the Two-Unit Plan, Mt. Holyoke Coll. (1940-43). Fanny Bullock Workman Scholarship for study abroad (1937-38). Alice Freeman Palmer Memorial Fellowship for research (1943-44). Member of Institute for Advanced Study (Princeton, N. J., 1943-44).

HUEBENER, THEODORE—Born and bred in New York City. A.B., City College (1918); A.M., Columbia (1922); Ph.D., Yale (1932). Teacher in elementary, junior and senior high schools. Principal, Bryant Summer High School. Gave courses at City College and Hunter College. Made survey of secondary education in England, France, Germany, and Switzerland (1936-37). Author of various text-books. Assistant Director (1935). Acting Director of Foreign Language since 1940.

THOMPSON, ELLA H.—A.M. (Cornell). Studied at Sorbonne. Taught Latin, French, English and General Language at Onondaga Central School, South Onondaga, N. Y. and Manassquan H. S., Manassquan, N. J. At present teaching Latin in Metuchen H. S., Metuchen, N. J.

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MORRIS, M. C.—A.B. (Haverford College); A.M., Ph.D. (University of Wisconsin). Spent five years in work and study in Europe. Taught at State Teachers College, Valley City, N. D. before becoming associate professor of foreign languages at Manchester College.

SCHAEFFER, AARON—A.B. (1914); Ph.D. (1917) Johns Hopkins Univ.; Member of the Dept. of Romance Languages of the University of Texas since 1920. First president of the South Central Mod. Lang. Assoc. Officier d'académie. Author of *Parnassus in France* and of numerous articles on the Parnassian poets. Editor of Maupassant's *Pierre et Jean*, *Boyle's la Bequette*, and other works. Author of *The Genres of Parnassian Poetry; A Study of the Minor Parnassians*, soon to be published by the Johns Hopkins Press.



## On Perusing the Contemporary Novels of French Canada

ELEANOR L. MICHEL

Meriden High School, Meriden, Conn.

(Author's summary.—The rôle of the land in the contemporary French-Canadian novel is worthy of study. In turn, the earth is the consoler, the sorceress, the adversary, the friend, and the guide of man. On the other hand, man considers himself part of the land which he loves and in which he takes great pride.)

TO SPEAK of French-Canadian novels, in the plural, may appear a bit strange since there has existed in the United States for a number of years a kind of cult which I like to call the *Maria Chapdelaine* cult. For various reasons, Louis Hémon's masterpiece epitomizes, in the minds of a great many Americans, not only the French-Canadian novel but French-Canadian literature as well. That *Maria Chapdelaine* merits a place in the literature of French Canada is incontestable, but in my humble opinion *Les Anciens Canadiens* by Philippe Aubert de Gaspé, published in 1863, is more representative. Philippe de Gaspé offers us a beautiful epic, a rich source of legends, superstitions, and customs; a penetrating character study; a moving drama; a fine historical pageant. Consequently, let us first free our minds of the idea that if we know *Maria Chapdelaine*, we know the French-Canadian novel.

It is true that the novel, as a literary type, was slow in making its appearance in Canada. It has come into its own only since the dawn of the twentieth century. From 1920 on, it has progressed appreciably. I do not wish to imply that there are among the contemporary French-Canadian novels masterpieces worthy to be ranked with those of a Gide, a Mauriac, or a Proust. Yet, we cannot longer deny the existence of a number of excellent contributions made by our Northern neighbors. Should the reader be interested in the novel of customs, he has only to turn to *30 Arpents* by Ringuet; *La Terre* by Ernest Choquette; *Un Homme et son péché* by Claude-Henri Grignon; *Menaud, Maître-Draveur* by Félix-Antoine Savard. On the other hand, should one prefer the historical novel, he may select *L'Oublié* by Laure Conan, the story of Lambert Closse and of the founding of the city of Montreal; *La Sève immortelle* by the same author, the story of the battle of Ste-Foye; *Les Engagés du Grand Portage* by Léo-Paul Desrosiers, the story of the struggle for supremacy among the great fur-trading companies of the North-West; *D'Un Océan à l'Autre* by Robert de Roquebrune, the story of the building of the Canadian-Pacific railway and of the revolt of the half-castes; *Les Habits Rouges* by the same author, the story of the revolt under Papineau in 1837. Those who are particularly attracted to the psychological novel may well choose *Les Dames Lemarchand* by Roquebrune, a novel which portrays two strong-willed women, a mother and a

grandmother, both determined to dominate the life of the son of one and of the grandson of the other; *Le Paria* by Ubalde Paquin, a novel which sketches for us a young man, haunted constantly by the memory of his father's crime; *Le Beau Risque* by François Hertel, a novel which describes beautifully the unfolding of an adolescent mind. Finally, those who have a special affection for the sociological novel will find satisfaction in perusing *La Ferme des Pins* by Harry Bernard, a novel which analyzes the problem of English survival in the Eastern provinces; *L'Homme tombé* by the same author, a novel which takes as its theme the marriage of a man and of a woman of widely different social classes; *La Maison Vide* by Bernard, a novel which stresses the danger of the destruction of home-life; *Marcel Faure* by Jean-Charles Harvey, a novel based on the idea of financial emancipation; and *André Laurence, Canadien-Français* by Pierre Dupuy, a novel which emphasizes the struggle of the young intellectual who lacks financial independence.

Whatever the type of novel, certain themes recur constantly. Among these themes, one seems most predominant—that of the love of the land. The very titles reflect the interest of the novelists in this respect, namely, *La Terre Vivante* by Bernard; *La Terre* by Choquette; *L'Appel de la Terre* by Potvin; *30 Arpents* by Ringuet; *La Campagne Canadienne* by Dugré. It is the idea of devotion to the earth which I should now like to discuss. The study will comprise two distinct parts: the first, the rôle of the land as it concerns man himself; the second, the reactions of man to the land.

The land plays, first of all, the part of a consoler. For example, in *La Terre Vivante*, Marie Beaudry, a young country girl, falls in love with a doctor from Montreal, a Dr. Bellerose. In loving him, Marie forgets completely her former sweetheart, Ephrem Brunet. Dr. Bellerose, however, does not take Marie seriously. In fact, he marries a young lady from his own city. Marie, broken-hearted, returns to her father's home. At first she appears inconsolable, but at length it is the land which helps her find her way once more. "The contact with the earth, a loving mother, had helped her find herself again," writes the author. In *Dolorès* by Bernard, Jacques, as a small child, after his mother's death, leaves for the home of his grandparents. What especially grieves him is the fact that he must leave little Lucille, his constant companion. Jacques recalls this separation, in the novel, and declares: "What saved me was the earth, the good earth, she whom we call the generous and maternal one, the great consoler." "The earth, calmed me," he continues. In the passages quoted, it is the earth which in moments of crisis calms and comforts man.

Sometimes the land appears in the guise of a sorceress. She finds her way to the heart of man and captivates it completely. No one can resist the charm of the earth. In *La Forêt* by Bugnet, Louise, the young Frenchwoman, who, with her husband, struggles to establish herself in a new

world, speaks to her husband as follows: "You always return to the land. It rules not only your body, but your whole mind. Yes, Roger, it rules even your heart." Rogers rejoins: "Really, I can't help finding the land beautiful and attractive. I'm amazed that you have been able so long to resist its allurements." We find in *Nipsya* by Bugnet phrases such as these: "The earth hypnotizes those who plow it." Dr. Duvert in *La Terre* by Choquette had always felt himself drawn to the land. Yves, the young man who is in love with the Doctor's daughter, feels himself drawn "by mysterious filaments which link him with each blade of grass on the old family farm."

The earth, sometimes a consoler and sometimes a sorceress, may at times become an adversary in a struggle to the death. We could find no better proof than in *la Forêt* by Bugnet. The Canada of the woodsmen is "an unconquered country which a harsh climate supports in its rebellion against domination by man." The young woman, in speaking to her husband when he finally decides to abandon the struggle and to return to France, says: "But you, Roger, and I? What could we ever have expected from this land? What would it have done to you? What would it have done to me? After having crushed our hearts and souls, can't you see that it would finally have claimed your corpse and mine?" The entire life of this family is spent in fighting the land, a land that is implacable, cruel, merciless.

The pitiless adversary, on the other hand, becomes sometimes transformed as the generous friend whose kindness knows no limit. In *La Sève immortelle* Laure Conan affirms that "the earth has never allowed to die of hunger those who have loved her." In *Menaud, Maître-Draveur* the old woodsman himself speaks affectionately of the land "which for three centuries has given of herself so that the race might be strong, hardy, valiant, sovereign." Choquette in *La Terre* speaks often of "that one who since the dawn of the ages has given man his daily bread."

Consoler, sorceress, adversary, friend, the earth serves too as man's guide. The land alone teaches "wisdom, calm, persistence, patience, economy." (*Menaud, Maître-Draveur.*)

Thus far we have been concerned with the rôle of the earth in relation to man. What can be said now about man's attitude toward the land? First, man considers himself an integral part of the land. For Alexis Maltais, the hero of Potvin's novel *La Rivière-à-Mars*, tearing himself away from even a part of the land is like having a limb cut off. "To divide his land, to take away from him one of its most beautiful sections, was as if they had burned alive Alexis Picoté," adds the novelist. In *30 Arpents* man and the land are linked inseparably. In *Le Beau Risque* François Hertel depicts the Canadians who are "incorporated with the land."

Sometimes it is man's profound love of the land which is manifest, a love which becomes in certain cases a kind of religious adoration. Robertson in *La Ferme des Pins* loves his land "with a sincere love, an all-inclusive

love, all the more sincere and lasting because it is not aware of itself." The religion of the land, if one may call it thus, finds expression in *Le Français* by Potvin. For the old father, the land possesses a sacred character, and a force superior to the greatest trials of life communicates itself to him when he communes with that land. In *Restons Chez Nous* by the same novelist, the earth appears as God's most beautiful gift. She it is "who sees us come into this life, who watches us live our happiest hours and who hopes some day to gather us unto herself." Potvin in *La Rivière-à-Mars*, in discussing the plans of Alexis Maltais, affirms that Alexis has a real devotion to the land.

This love of the land becomes at times sensuous. The earth appeals to the eye, to the ear, to the touch. In *Ménard, Maître-Draveur* the "pungent scent of the forest" and the "voices of the fields" attract the woodsman. In *30 Arpents*, Uncle Ephrem dies on his land, his breast pressed against that of the earth. Finally, in the eyes of Euchariste Moisan, the visible richness of the land is a delight ever new.

To this love of the land, is joined a certain pride on the part of the peasant, a pride in belonging to the tradition of the land. Bernard states in *L'Homme tombé* that aristocracy does not exist in the country. With few exceptions, all are sons, grandsons and great-grandsons of colonists and men of the land. In *Les Opiniâtres* by Desrosiers, a novel of the period of the Indian wars, the colonists become sentinels on guard; no one abandons his post; each must remain faithful to the tradition of the land. For the Canadians of Maisonneuve's time, to clear the land, to plough, to sow seed was the noblest work the hand of man might accomplish.

Finally, man attributes to the land certain human characteristics. In *Le Français* we find this lovely line describing the peasants busily engaged in raking in the fields: "They were carefully combing the earth's brown hair" Indeed, it is a land which needs to be loved in order to find the strength to satisfy man. In *L'Appel de la Terre* the peasants go so far as to drink blueberry wine to the health of old Duval's land. Man, then, in the contemporary French-Canadian novel becomes an integral part of the land, of that land he loves and reveres, of the land to which he attributes human traits.

Our short study permitted us to peruse together a certain number of contemporary French-Canadian novels, especially from the point of view of the significant rôle played by the land. We have been able to substantiate the truth of Damase Potvin's affirmation: "Would you know the heart of a people? Examine the country it inhabits, the land which has formed it after its own image." Truly it is the voice of the French-Canadian land which comes to us through the pages of a budding literature, a literature worthy of encouragement and replete with promise for the future.

## *The Post-War Jobs. What Are the High Schools Doing To Prepare Youth for Them?*

LILLY LINDQUIST

*Director of Foreign Languages, Detroit, Michigan*

IS IT true, as many say, that our liberal education in the pre-war period has proved itself of questionable value? Some of the reasons given for this belief are, "Students come too slowly to grips with provocative and appealing subject matter; that the first two years of college traverse too identically the last two years of high school; . . . that the problem starts in the secondary school where the last two years need wide revamping and stepping up in the selection of suitable study content and in the method of imparting it."\*

The article from which the above quotation is taken is concerned with colleges, but, by implication as well as by statement, it is an indictment of the set-up of our educational system.

The fact that our high schools and colleges as well as special army training centers offer refresher courses in English, mathematics, science, and social studies indicates that our students have failed in the fundamentals from pure inertia because there was no zest in their learning. The slang phrase, "What's the use," is the answer. There was no incentive apparent beyond marks necessary "to pass the subject." The apathy of the bright students, who grasp quickly and are able to proceed at a good pace, grew as they found themselves outnumbered in classes by the dull and lazy ones who required all the instructor's efforts and ingenuity.

The brighter students are handicapped from the first year in high school by the fact that they are not free to progress at their own pace or permitted to concentrate on the content courses in which their interests center. They have to take so many hours of so many required subjects. The students are regimented into a stereotyped program. The students must fit into the same mold. After they have occupied seats in a classroom for a certain number of hours per week for a specified number of years, they receive a high school diploma certifying that they have "graduated" from high school. The brighter students are rewarded with a "cum laude" or "magna cum laude" added on their diplomas.

This is education in a democracy where we must not discourage the inefficient for fear that he may get an inferiority complex. But the Army does not hesitate to discourage the inefficient. The Army puts a premium on efficiency.

The United States Government has encouraged high schools and colleges to accelerate the brighter students by telescoping the last year of high

\* "Why Liberal Colleges Tomorrow" by Ordway Tead, in *Amherst Graduates Quarterly*, November, 1943.



school with the first year of college. The students now have an incentive. If they have the right stamina they work and accomplish things. What is more, they are given the opportunity to do the things they want to do. Their inclinations and abilities are weighed and considered in placing them in the training centers. Gone is the apathy of the past. Even the dull and the lazy are put to work. No drones are tolerated in the armed forces.

Why did we not realize before that emasculating our high school program was not the insignia of a democratic education? This is a plea for a more liberal program for the brighter students in high school. By a more liberal program is not meant the pernicious habit fostered by the extensive elective system which enables students to sample too many subjects and thus avoid that continuity of effort demanded by a cumulative subject such as Latin, French, or any other foreign language where each successive course depends on the previous one for progress and growth. By *liberal* we mean granting brighter students the privilege of taking a subject in any grade in the high school. For instance, let a first year student take a third year subject if he is mature enough to profit by the shift. Let a good student take a foreign language in the place of history or civics or English, if the foreign language would be more appealing and more interesting to the student, in which case the foreign language training would be equally valuable because of the satisfaction which the student would get from studying a living language with all its facets and implications. Never before have so many people wished they could speak another language as now when there are so many needs for communicating with other people in all parts of our globe.

If a student in high school believes that he wants to study French, German, or Spanish and sees some future benefit to himself in studying it, why should he not have the opportunity to try it? If his ability lies in the direction of science the student should be allowed to devote more time to that subject. We need experts in every field. Because many of us, who have lived through World War I and its aftermath, know from experience what the post-war reconstruction will demand in the way of trained personnel we feel justified in shouting from the housetops, "Don't waste time and effort now, get busy for the important jobs ahead! What are *you*, young man and young woman, going to get ready for the job that awaits *you*? How many of our young people are now studying an important foreign language that will enable them to step into a job where a knowledge of French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish, or some other language will be the *sine qua non*?

You cannot learn a foreign language overnight. You need time and plenty of practice to acquire the ability to use a foreign language. Begin now to learn a second language and get the joy and the power that come from being able to communicate with other human beings in other parts of the world. The sooner you begin the more you will know when you are needed to step into the very job for which you are ready.

## *The Two Year General Course*

BLANCHE VAUDREUIL

*Stamford High School, Stamford, Connecticut*

(Author's summary.—The methodology used in our two year general course, and suggestions for changing a shorter course from the detailed, written approach, to an oral-aural understanding of the language, as a preliminary to the further study of French continued after high school.)

**I**N THIS age, when the panorama of life is changing so rapidly, when curriculums are being discussed as to their practicality and "turn over value" in the outside world, should we not ask ourselves, as teachers of the French language and civilization, "Are we inculcating new skills or are we overstressing the 'written' French instead of emphasizing the oral and aural (understanding the language when spoken) element in the two year course?"

I quote from a lecture given by Mr. I. L. Kandel in the Lincoln School auditorium in New York which was published in the *French Review*, October, 1942, in which he says, "It may be that much still needs to be done to eliminate many of the traditions of language instruction which makes it dull, if not repellent. There may be still too much emphasis on the techniques and not enough on the content."

How many of us have the right guidance to make sure we are using correct methods in the "presentation" of subject matter and have practical objectives in mind? Do we use our visiting days to observe in other model schools? Where are the observation classes? Is there too much theory and not enough practise in carrying out these theories?

We should all like a much longer course in French; that would be Utopia. It would take at least four or more years to acquire even a fair degree of fluency in the oral and written use of the language, following the four objectives, which cannot properly be mastered in a two year course. Surveys have shown that the majority of students drop French after two years, and well defined objectives within that time should be kept in mind.

The ability to pass the college entrance examinations is no assurance that the four objectives have been met. As a rule this group which is rated successful does not understand the spoken language. This fact seems a primary aim, and a very practical item in after school life, and a pupil does not have to be able to write correctly a sentence such as—*Je ne les ai pas vues, ces plumes bleues que Jeanne a laissées sur la table*—which involves "la fameuse règle de l'accord des participes" (and which takes much more time than two years to speak and write easily), in order to get the meaning of that sentence, even speaking it. The main point is to understand it when read and when spoken.

When pupils tell me each day all the French they have heard over the radio, or at the cinéma, and the French they encounter in their English

readings; when one pupil told me she had understood and repeated to me the introduction in the screen version of *Philadelphia Story*—"Je suis enchantée de faire votre connaissance"—I felt some carry over value had been accomplished and the "ear attuned." The reason she knew the words orally so well is because although this is a "reading" course, we learn many conversational pieces, and every day we have questions about the weather or time or the day, the season, etc., done orally.

One hears graduates often say, upon hearing French spoken—"I can't understand what they are saying"—and I feel this is due to an over stressing of the written language, which should be the last objective, and to the fact that they are "getting ready" for the college boards—and understressing the oral approach which warrants a minimum of mistakes when later written. I hear so often, "Oh, but we must prepare for the college boards!" As a matter of fact very few students take the college board entrance examinations and only in a few cases are they demanded by the colleges.

In reference again to the college boards, at least nine pages (1941 examination) refer to the skills used in the two year course—and nine lines only of English to French translation, which shows the trends of the college boards toward newer type comprehension exercises used in the new reading objective, which Miss Helen Eddy has so ably written in detail in her pamphlet, *Training for Reading*, and which describes the correct reading approach for any course (see United States Department of the Interior, Bulletin 17, *Introduction to the French Language* (1932)).

The two year course lays the foundation for a more extensive use of the oral and written objective, with most certainly a minimum of mistakes, in case the pupil continues the study of the language outside of high school; their first line of defense, so to speak.

These two year pupils get a great deal out of a two year course besides the main objectives; the appreciation of French culture and civilization and in their contacts with other courses; the French in art; history; the pupils look up the various names connected with French civilization, the sciences and inventions. We have some records of French composers, operas, etc. I refer to such names as Curie, Pasteur, Montgolfier, Lumière, Braille, Jacquard, Lavoisier (new book, *The Torch and the Crucible*), Rodin, Renoir, DeBussy, and many others which tie up with other departments. We have reproductions of French paintings of the more prominent artists and talk of the lives of some. Are not the meanings of these names a part of French civilization and a distinct appeal to the spiritual and emotional which we may overlook for the grind of the technical language development?

What about new French songs: *Viens danser*; *Madame la Marquise*; *Blanche Neige et les sept Nains*; *Madelon*; etc.?

Pupils have such diverse interests, and I believe that we must stop for individual differences and attention; the constant use of realia, as we go along, pictures, maps, anecdotes connected with subject matter; and asso-

ciation with material used in relation with daily lessons and current events, are most important for interest—by the wayside pauses in our daily work for things that are not only of the moment, but of the ages. Pupils hear over the radio such expressions as “*rapprochement, entente cordiale, sabotage, reconnaissance, coup de grâce,*” and we stop to discuss these words and their meaning.

Let me add The French in America. Hélène et Robert Fouré's *Souvenirs Français en Amérique*; the origin of French names in America, of cities, etc., L'Enfant, Audubon, Jaques Cartier, Paul Rivoire, and others. The Story of Benjamin Franklin in Paris; Thomas Jefferson's ideas in regard to the French, and so on.

The reading by the teacher of, for instance, *La Dernière Classe*, expressively, to get the real meaning and feeling for the beauty of Daudet's charming story, which is very much à propos in these times. The reading by the teacher of such poems as *Extase*, by Hugo, *L'Albatros*, by Beaude-laire, *O Soleil*, by Rostand (Chantecler).

This two year course gives the pupil a chance to get out of the study of French what their talents enable them to encompass. We are in an age of individual development, whether in the technical or the spiritual. Our purpose is an understanding of the French heard every day or seen in any book they may read in or out of school.

To summarize, I would say these are the objectives of the two year course in French:

To develop to the point of enjoyment the ability to read French; I mean to grasp the thought of a passage, the reading by eye-fuls rather than word by word. Constant thumbing of vocabularies is, to me, a death knell to the interest of a story; what has been developed in class by explanation by the teacher, in French; by gestures, by association with any language the pupil may know through his home contacts, or Latin, English—is much better remembered. All exercises lean toward the main objectives—to clinch the understanding of the reading matter, and are subservient to this objective.

Good pronunciation and intonation. I stress intonation because it is most important to the aural comprehension—the dividing of the sentence into group tones. Those who have taken courses in French diction will know what I mean. It is the only way to efficient aural comprehension, and a great deal of this work is done in chorus. A degree of oral ability, and a greater degree of aural comprehension.

However, too much silent reading can never take the place of oral and aural comprehension, and for this reason, I believe quality should precede quantity.

Some of the texts used are: “The Chicago-Heath graded readers, some by Miss Eddy (see catalogue.) There are so many of these graded readers to choose from. We have used, for instance, *Si Nous Lisions*, followed by *Le Roi des Montagnes*, or Bovée's *D'Artagnan*. Incidentally Mr. Bovée has

some new graded readers which are interesting. I am definitely sold on the graded readers for the first year, anyway. There are the Dondo Books, such as *Contes Dramatiques* which I use for aural comprehension in the first year. There are the Bovée and Linquist books, Miss Eddy's complete two year Basic French books; the Coleman readers, and selections from Maupassant, Daudet, Hugo, Dumas, Maurois, Bazin; *Le Jongleur de Notre Dame*, by A. France, and Dondo's *Pathelin et autres Pièces*, which we use in the second year, taking our choice from year to year. We are using this year the new O'Brien and La France books, first and second year. However, whatever books we use just those exercises that train for the objectives are carried out. We must be bigger than the book; bring in an element of interest, let the pupils do much of the work, with no more black board use than necessary. "Une faute permise est une faute acquise." Make your questions a challenge. French need not be "with tears." In our infancy we spoke English long before we ever took a pencil and paper in hand, and so, for this reason, let's not forget that "L'oreille a ses raisons que la raison ne connaît pas."

In these days when we are all thinking about the redirection of secondary education, the time has come for every teacher to define more clearly her own objectives. This is one attempt to meet this situation and the content herein is actually in daily practice at Stamford High School, in the general course French.

"FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR THE 'AIR AGE'!"

"AMERICANS, AWAKE TO LANGUAGE NEEDS!"

"FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR GLOBAL WAR AND GLOBAL PEACE!"



## *A Neglected Point of Grammar* *The Passive Voice*

J. P. LE COQ

*Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa*

(*Author's summary.*—The American student is constantly confronted with the difficult rendering of the Passive Voice. Grammars, as a rule, shed very little light on the subject. The following article is an attempt to bring the problem to the attention of teachers and an invitation to those willing and able to assume the preparation of grammar texts, to give the subject the treatment it deserves.)

### I

SHOULD a professor, in some future time, undertake to write a history or a memorandum of foreign language teaching and linguistic development in the United States, during the first half of the twentieth century, the conclusion will probably be that, in that period, the interest in language study was of paramount importance, judging from the number of grammars of all kinds that were published.

The point of saturation does not seem to have been reached yet since every now and then a new grammar appears claiming to be an improvement in artistic design, method of approach, presentation and technique over the preceding ones. It is not certain that all carry out adequately their assumed claims; many, indeed fail to come fully to the high expectations of their sponsors but, there is no doubt, however, that in the standpoint of methodology, clarity of exposition, scientific selection of vocabulary and well chosen translation exercises, a notable progress over the 1900 period is evident.

Due, perhaps, to outside pressure oftentimes inimical to the proper development of language curricula, due also to our varied aims or somewhat different if not antagonistic methodology, many of our authors have tried to adapt their grammars to fit many purposes; they wanted to please everybody and, too often, they have succeeded in satisfying nobody.

Faced with the limited time given to language study, in a great number of schools, and the meager requirements for graduation, they have yielded to the pressure of popular demand for conciseness and simplicity not realizing that these qualities, if overdone, tend to destroy their intended effectiveness. Even a superficial perusal of many of our grammars will quickly reveal that, in some instances, the editors have overshot their marks and presented a lifeless skeleton whose coefficient is lack of interest created, in part, by too much compactness that is responsible for lack of clarity. These factors may have contributed to the neglect of many grammatical points and the superficial treatment of some rules or the perfunctory elimination of others.

The fact is that, on examining most of the grammars that have been published, in the last few decades, by the leading publishing houses, it be-

comes obvious that one item of real importance—the *passive voice*—has not received the treatment it deserves or has been completely forgotten.

In these days of longer teaching hours, added duties, and distraught minds, it may be a sort of imposition to write a long winded disquisition on the theoretical side of the passive voice, its history and evolution in our modern languages. I shall, therefore, for the sake of brevity, confine myself to presenting the problem in the form of a simple note and, in order to bring it within the compass of a few pages, I shall circumscribe the present study to French and English, making only incidental mention of German and Spanish owing to the similarity of the subject at hand in regard to these languages.

Let us, therefore, investigate briefly the formation and function of the passive voice from the basis of English and French and, by way of conclusion, bring out elementary rules that may help our students to deal more understandingly with the translation from one language into the other and to acquire some familiarity with the correlation of the French and English passive. Such is the primary reason for this note. The secondary purpose is to challenge colleagues who have the time and the ability to prepare grammars for future generations of students to give the passive voice its due for, if we look at it closely, we soon discover that it merits a little attention.

## II

The passive voice is more commonly found in English than in French. "The genius of the English language demands a wide use of the passive," said Bain. The French, on the contrary, prefers the active. This difference or attitude, as it were, means that the rendering from one language into the other may not be the exact evaluation of a given quantity considering that the English line of thought does not run parallel with the French. Admitting the approximate identity of the action in its physical aspects, the psychological effect may, nonetheless, be different since, in one case the subject acts and, in the other, it is acted upon. "Paul is hit"; "On frappe Paul."

The main difficulty comes, however, from the periphrastic morphology of the passive in our modern languages which, as in English and French, must be conjugated with the help of the auxiliary. The French as one of the Indo-European languages, takes its immediate roots from the Latin. Now, the true Latin form of the passive was expressed by a simple monoform word—*amor*—. The other form, the periphrastic form—*amatus sum*—did not represent action but condition.

Of these two forms—*amor*—and—*amatus sum*—only the latter remains in our modern languages. If we express the following statement: "I am loved," it has no definite meaning unless the context lends itself to it. The sentence may mean love in action, love that either begins or goes on. It

may also mean that, if abstraction of any action is made, we have only a state, a condition, the condition of being loved. In the first instance, the verbal form—I am loved—should be rendered into French by the active voice—"On m'aime," while the second, that is, the adjectival form, should be translated into—"Je suis aimé"—.

The point to emphasize to our students is that the English throws together in one phraseology two entirely different types of sentences. To illustrate: "The school door is closed at four o'clock." Such sentence may mean: "at four o'clock the school door is closed and no one can pass through it"; or it may mean: "at four o'clock somebody is closing the school door and it is still possible to slip through."

One of these sentences, the latter, is a true passive; the other, the former, is really an active sentence which merely describes a state of things. The reason the American pupil so frequently goes astray on this point is that his language does not make this distinction and consequently he is frequently unaware that it exists. Our grammars ought to make clear this distinction. In this instance the French translation will help clarify the issue. The French, in this case, will translate the true English passive meaning by the active voice and, consequently, the above sentence would be translated into: "On ferme la porte de l'école à quatre heures." The condition, on the other hand, would be translated into the adjectival form: "La porte de l'école est fermée à quatre heures." The Spanish verbs "ser" and "estar" would, of course, make the case clear.

If we study the transformation of the Latin passive in the Romance Languages, we see that, from the earliest times, the periphrastic form, that is, the auxiliary—to be—and the past participle, meant an accomplished fact which, in reality, became a state, a condition. Due, no doubt, to the absence, in French, of the Latin monoform—*amor*—, Condillac was led to say (*Grammar*, II, 10) that "the French has no passive. It is, in fact, with the proper past participle added to the various forms of the auxiliary—to be—that we translate the Latin verbs into the passive voice."

Condillac had in mind, apparently, the true monoform passive of the Latin against the compound rendering of the French. The passive idea and action exist in French, to be sure, but the loss of true passive form, in comparison with the Latin, made the French less cryptic and opened the way to amphibology. To make the meaning of the Latin verbal form clear, the French have substituted the active form as much as possible. This explains, in part, why our text books state that "the French prefers the active voice." This is correct when no mention of the agent is made or intended as in: "French is spoken here"; "Ici on parle français." It is only when the agent is mentioned that the so-called passive form is generally used. "The house was built by John"; "La maison fut bâtie par Jean."

During the transition period of classical Latin into popular Latin, we notice that the passive inflection disappeared and, as seen in Petronius and

many others, a certain number of deponent verbs are used as active verbs. In the intermediate period the passive was frequently replaced by reflexive and active construction. So, instead of having—*littera scribitur*—, we find:—*littera se scribit*—. The French language coming directly from popular Latin naturally retained this popular form and has preserved it to this day. Such a derivation has led to the formulation of the following statement: "The English passive is often translated by the French reflexive." The advice is good but, to be worth anything, it must be accompanied by some explanatory note with examples; otherwise, instead of helping the students, the above statement only tends to confuse them.

Since our text-books fail to state when the French reflexive form may be used instead of the English passive form, a legitimate question may be asked: "When is the French reflexive form a legitimate substitute for the English passive? The answer may be as follows: it is permissible to substitute the French reflexive for the English passive in two ways: 1st. *personally*, that is, when the subject (noun or pronoun) is expressed: Ex: "Mary's face is not seen"; "La figure de Marie ne se voit pas"; "This word is pronounced easily"; "Ce mot se prononce facilement"; "This decoration is not given to anyone but soldiers"; "Cette décoration ne se donne qu'aux soldats."; 2nd. *Impersonally*. Ex: "A strange noise is heard in the country"; "Il se répand un bruit étrange dans le pays." "There are found pretty things in that store"; "Il se trouve de jolies choses dans ce magasin."

The indefinite pronoun "on" may be substituted for the above French forms when the English verb assumes a passive form and a more or less indefinite meaning is intended. Ex: "It is said that the queen is ill"; "On dit que la reine est malade." "You are wanted in the office"; "On vous demande au bureau." In this case, the English sentence conveys the idea of indefiniteness, someone, somebody, an unknown person wants you in the office.

### III

We have just seen that the English passive voice may be translated in French by: 1st., the active; 2nd., the reflexive; 3rd., the indefinite active with "on" as subject of the third person singular and; 4th., by the passive when the agent is mentioned.

In addition to the points just referred to, there is another important phenomenon in regard to the rendering of the English passive into the French active that is entirely brushed aside in our grammar texts. In Fraser and Squair (edit. 1901, paragraph 241) we read: "Only transitive verbs regularly have the passive voice." True as this statement is, it leads to all kinds of errors especially when it is linked with another that says: "The passive voice is permissible, in French, when the agent is mentioned." If that were true, absolutely speaking, such sentences as the following should be correct: "I am told the truth"; "Je suis dit la vérité." "I was told the

truth by Paul"; "Je fus dit la vérité par Paul." "Mary was allowed to go home by me"; "Marie fut permise d'aller à la maison par moi." Such translation is absurd, of course, but the student is apt to ask the reason for it. The student is guided by the grammar rule that clearly states that: "transitive verbs have regularly the passive voice" and, if the "agent is mentioned," the student fails to see the logic of all this.

The verbs *dire*, *demander*, *permettre* are transitive and, therefore, according to the general statement given above the French rendering should be correct. Many other examples, of course, and many other verbs could be given to substantiate the general rule. If we point out to the students that the aforesaid translation is wrong, we must be prepared to give some explanation which is lacking in available grammars. It is not enough to state that it is an exception due to usage and custom. Students, in the first place, are not supposed to know much about usage or custom in the foreign tongue. After all, usage itself is the effect of a cause known or unknown and it is a meritorious thing to try, at least, to find the cause.

The fact is that we should make clear to our students the idea of the active voice and the transitive verbs. If we consider the transitive verbs, we realize that the action transits, as it were, directly into the object. Ex: "Paul hits Mary"; "Paul frappe Marie." Certain verbs, however, although transitive, *per se*, are deficient in the sense that, in some cases, they do not allow the subject to act directly on all sorts of objects, persons or things. The verbs—*dire*, *demander*, *permettre*, *prier*, etc., etc., are transitive but they cannot have a person as direct object simply because there can be no action that transits directly from the subject onto the object. Hence, we could not translate literally: "Paul was told the truth"; "Paul fut dit la vérité." The verb "*dire*" cannot have any direct action on Paul. The action of Paul will come through the direct object "*vérité*," therefore, indirectly.

This principle stands out quite clearly in other modern foreign languages, namely, in German that, on transferring from active to passive, a dative object remains a dative. So it is in French. The reason, therefore, we cannot change "I told Paul" into "Paul was told by me" and translate: "Je dis Paul," "Paul fut dit par moi," is that in both languages, French and German, "Paul" is a dative, not an accusative and, consequently, cannot function as the subject of the passive sentence.—A word representing an entity that cannot be acted upon as direct object, cannot be used as subject of the passive verbs. The following rule may, then, be formulated: It is never permissible to use the passive voice, in French, in translating the English passive, when the subject of the English sentence cannot be used as direct object of the French verb. Ex: "Paul was not allowed to stay home" cannot be rendered by the passive in French because "Paul" cannot be used as direct object of the verb. "Paul" is and remains a dative. The translation, therefore, requires the active voice, in French, and must be: "On ne permit pas à Paul de rester à la maison."



## IV

It is evident that the foregoing remarks fall short of being complete. No attempt has been made to give a full account of the passive voice, at this time. Later on, time permitting, it may be more appropriate to treat the subject, *in extenso*, giving, thereby, a fuller comprehension of the matter at hand.

When we pass in review the various scholarly books published in English, German, French and Spanish, we recognize their intrinsic value but we do not see that they serve adequately and directly our purpose because each author treats the subject of the passive voice mostly in the standpoint of his own vernacular. We need a comparative study of, let us say, the English and French passive voice and the integration of both. We need, in addition, the formulation of rules governing the use of the passive voice from one language into the other made clear and simple enough so that they may be useful to our students.

Our students are confronted with difficulties that are hard to solve, in the present circumstances, for two reasons: 1. The average Freshman or Sophomore lacks the proper foundation necessary for a ready comprehension of comparative grammar. 2. Our grammars, for reasons difficult to understand, either give a perfunctory treatment to the passive or do not even mention it at all.

If we agree that the passive voice is an important grammatical item and, if we realize the general neglect of the subject, we shall come to the conclusion that a fuller treatment is imperative and due consideration should be given to it in our grammars. It may not be too much to hope that many, among us, will agree to give Caesar the things that are Caesar's.

"AMERICANS, AWAKE TO LANGUAGE NEEDS!"

# *The Dramatic Element in Spanish Literature and an English Dramatization of a Spanish Source*

FRANK E. SNOW

*Mississippi State College, State College, Mississippi*

(Author's summary.—The dramatization of suitable material as a form of creative and interpretative elaboration supplementary to the reading of literature. Examples of dramatized Spanish literature. Don Manuel's "El Escolar y el Nigromante" source of the one-act play, "Ingratitude.")

SUPPLEMENTARY to the reading of literature there are various possibilities of elaboration on it that may add to its greater appreciation and enjoyment. One of the many forms that have proved to be efficient in obtaining this desirable result, mostly in the field of prose, is the dramatization of suitable material, such as certain novels, and, especially, tales and short-stories. Since the literature in Spanish, ancient and modern, has always excelled in this particular branch, much of its prose may be said to be potentially dramatic, that is, to contain rich possibilities of being carried to the stage. There was hardly anyone more conscious of this underlying dramatic principle than Pérez Galdós whose themes appear equally fascinating in the form of the play and in that of the novel (*La Loca de la Casa; Doña Perfecta*). Besides, his dramatization of his own novels decidedly served the purpose of propagating their theses.

The scenic adaptation of valuable ancient literature is a way of reviving and recelerating it. As an example may serve *La Aventura de los Galeotes* (from Cervantes' *Don Quijote*) by the Álvarez Quinteros brothers.

Of course, there is no law as to how faithfully the dramatization is to reflect the original source which often turns out to be a source of creative inspiration for the dramatic transformation. Thus, Marquina's drama in verse, *Las Hijas del Cid*, although inspired from the famous *Poema del Cid*, in many details does not coincide with the source.

The very opportunity to give a novel or a short story an interpretation of his own may tempt a dramatist to undertake his task. In this case the dramatization involves the function of an indirect comment on the source.

The source of the following one-act play, *Ingratitude*, is Don Manuel's *El Escolar y el Nigromante* (from *El Conde Lucanor*). It may be read and staged collaterally with the reading of the source in or outside class.

Don Manuel's tale concerns a young ambitious student of theology who begs the great master of alchemy, don Illan de Toledo, to initiate him in the secret art. Having received the student's solemn oaths to be always grateful to the master, don Illan, apparently, accepts the student. Thanks to the master's teachings the student ascends to the most powerful positions. Nevertheless, the student proves himself to be entirely ungrateful for the received benefits and, in the end, having become Pope, utterly humiliates his benefactor. At this moment the master

makes the student realize suddenly that all these events were but imaginary, evidently called forth or suggested by the master's magic art to test the student's worthiness.

It will be up to the students to find out about things added or modified in the play. Nevertheless, it can be said that the dominating theme of ingratitude, as well as the development of the action, is closely related to the source.

Since Don Manuel times and customs have changed; not so the people. For their faults and merits, their passions and aspirations fundamentally are the same. Thus, the story of the ambitious and ungrateful student and the wise master today is as fresh as 600 years ago when it was first conceived. In the expectation that the perpetuity of the literary value of Don Manuel's tale may be realized in even a keener way by performing and living it on the stage, I herewith offer it in an English dramatization which, I hope, will contribute to a further enjoyment and wider and easier propagation of the Spanish source and encourage similar activities in this field on the part of our students.

### INGRATITUDE

#### *Dramatis Personae*

Alchemist  
 Servant  
 Ricardo Rodríguez  
 Juan  
 José  
 Cardinal

Time: 13th Century. Place: Spain

Scene: (The Alchemist's home. A room filled with books and scientific instruments and medieval machines. The Alchemist, an old man, near-sighted, bent closely over the Bible.)

ALCH. (stops reading) Almighty God, Thy truth is eternal and ever revealing itself, refreshing like the morning-dew on flowers and grass. My eyes grow dim. Yet, while I seek Thee and find Thee, the light shines brightly, my mind is penetrating deeply, deep into the source of many of Thy secrets; the shades of mystery recede.

O may the knowledge, that through Thy grace has come to me, be helpful guidance to the good; may it be kept from unworthy, evil minds. May I never, never be misled to open the holy shrine of human wisdom to those who would abuse its magic power for bad and selfish purposes. May I preserve Thy gifts immaculate until the finish of my earthly days!

(ENTER: SERVANT)

SERV. Master!—Master! A young stranger wants to talk to you.

ALCH. Now? Have you forgotten, after so many a year of faithful service, that your old master spends the evening hours in solitary meditation? Go, tell the stranger, he shall be welcome tomorrow morning at the usual time when I receive my visitors.

SERV. Forgive me, master, that is exactly what I told the stranger; but he insists; now, right now, he wants to see you.

ALCH. "Now, right now! O impatience of young people who can never wait.

SERV. That, indeed, he said, he could not wait. Maybe, he is in urgent need of you.

ALCH. Maybe; I never did refuse my help to those who needed it.

SERV. Shall I let him in?

ALCH. Yes, I shall receive him now.

(SERV. shows RICARDO in)

RIC. (violently stepping toward the ALCH.) Illustrious master . . . !

ALCH. You know me?

RIC. Who does not know the most famous of all masters of alchemy, the glory of Spain, the discoverer of nature's secrets, the author of the "Key of Wisdom"?

ALCH. My son, I am only a poor old man who likes, remote from glory and from fame, to do his modest work. But who are you, young friend?

RIC. Ricardo Rodríguez is my name. I come from Salamanca.

ALCH. A long way, my son.

RIC. There is no way too long that leads to you, illustrious master.

ALCH. You must not flatter me. What can I do for you?

RIC. Save my life, o master!

ALCH. Are you in danger?

RIC. Yes, indeed, in danger to become blind in dark obscurity, in danger to perish from starvation.

ALCH. I shall try to help you, my friend.

RIC. O illuminate the darkness of my ignorance, restore my hungry mind with the divine food of wisdom. Teach me, let me be your pupil!

ALCH. My pupil—?

RIC. I'll pay you, I'll pay you back. My uncle and foster father is the bishop of Salamanca. His properties will all be mine one day.

ALCH. I am not used to sell the knowledge that through prayer, meditation and study has come to me.

RIC. I know, there are no riches in the world, even half equal to your wisdom. Forgive me, master, I am a fool to offer gold to you, who surely know the formula by which the precious metal is produced.

ALCH. I do not know this secret, nor do I care for it. The greedy search of gold, my friend, distorts the mind of men; it is one of the main sources of unhappiness. I pity the alchemists who sweat a lifetime over fruitless experiments to find what never can be found; because this metal is a basic, a fundamental body in itself. Those who pretend to know the secret of how to compose it, are fakers, black-masters of the blackest art, who cleverly abuse the people's superstition.

RIC. O could I but be your pupil! O, could my uncle hear you talking, and all his doubts would disappear at once.

ALCH. His doubts?

RIC. The bishop distrusts the science of alchemy; he, unjustly, calls it an unholy art.

ALCH. Unholy, my friend, become all arts men stain with impure minds. Would they instead, investigate with honest purposes the wonders of the universe, then alchemy could shine as the most brilliant among all sciences, and all its findings would serve humanity.

RIC. Like the invention of your healing elixirs.

ALCH. This, indeed, I deem one of the noblest tasks of alchemy: to cure men's body with healing extracts from minerals, plants, and metals; to restore his ailing mind with religion's and philosophy's incomparable medicine.

RIC. Master, I studied religion and philosophy at our university in Salamanca. I also read, against my uncle's wish, many a book of magic art to learn about the mysteries of nature. But I feel miserable in my ignorance. I cannot decipher the secret signs and symbols with which the magic books are covered. And nature seems to me an unintelligible scrawl and full of contradictions.

ALCH. Because the form of things does not explain their essence. There is a spirit at work beneath the outside shell of all creations. That which is written on this shell, no one can read but the initiated. He alone is granted to extract the quintessence of things if God so pleases.

RIC. O master, won't you initiate me in this secret art? I beseech you.

ALCH. My son, you undertook a long trip and your impatience to see me was great; as great as

your desire for learning the magic art. But you are asking me for something I never granted anybody in my life. The knowledge of alchemy is sacred; it is the greatest power that God bestows on man. Wherever help is needed, I try to use this power for the benefit of those in pain. Yet, I beware of giving away, either in part, or as a whole, that which is not needed urgently. For the temptation to abuse the magic powers would be great and ruinous for anyone.

RIC. Not for me, not for me, I promise. Do not refuse me, let me be your pupil; I'll be obedient and most faithful to you. I'll never disappoint you in anything.

ALCH. My son, do not insist; it hurts me to deny your ardent wish.

RIC. Please, master, please! I know, there's nothing I can offer in return, nothing,—except my gratitude.

ALCH. And do you call "nothing" one of the most precious goods? Is gratitude nothing? I think it is the only compensation for which I would ever care.

RIC. O master, if you mean it, my thankfulness is boundless, infinite; accept it, I beg you, accept me as your pupil (lifting his hand in formal promise), I pledge my everlasting gratitude to you.

ALCH. Your passion, my son, is great indeed; and as I am old, my years counted, maybe you are the one to carry on my work, you, who came so unexpectedly to me. If you are worthy of your pledge, I shall accept it and open to you the sacred art of alchemy.

RIC. I shall prove to you that I am worthy of your goodness, my master.

ALCH. (laying his hands on RIC.'s shoulders and looking straight into his eyes) Yes, you shall prove this to me, my son, no doubt, you shall prove it soon, clearly and truthfully as in a dream, reveal yourself entirely to me,—(putting RIC. into a state of hypnosis)—clearly and truthfully as in a dream (pushing RIC. softly on an easy-chair). Now, rest, my son, rest, my son, from your long, long journey.

RIC. I feel tired, master.

ALCH. Yes, you are tired, so tired, Go to sleep, go to sleep, dream happy, truth-revealing dreams, happy truth-revealing dreams (steps behind the chair without taking his hands from RIC.'s shoulders).

(RICARDO'S eyes close; the LIGHT has been getting ever dimmer and finally goes out. A bluish dream-suggesting LIGHT will increasingly illuminate the next and following scenes.)

(RICARDO is seated at a desk, studying a book. ENTER JUAN.)

JUAN (not yet visible, with a soft voice) Don Ricardo! Don Ricardo!

RIC. Who is it?

JUAN (stepping silently forward) Don Ricardo!

RIC. (without turning away from the book) What do you want, man?

JUAN Don Ricardo, don't you recognize your uncle's and your servant, Juan?

RIC. Do not disturb me.

JUAN Don Ricardo, I bring you sad news: your uncle is ill. The bishop fell heart-sick when you departed without his blessing.

RIC. Why did he refuse it to me?

JUAN Your uncle needs you, Don Ricardo; he is most anxious to see and bless his nephew, his foster son before . . . (drops his head)

RIC. Before what?

JUAN Before he leaves forever.

RIC. Nonsense! The bishop will be all right, I am sure. Go, tell my uncle that I took his blessing for granted when I left, that I accept anew the blessings which he sends me now through you.

JUAN But, Don Ricardo, your uncle is very, very sick!

RIC. Go man, he will be well again if God so pleases.

JUAN Why, Don Ricardo—!

RIC. Man, can you not see that I am studying my master's secret writ about the strongest of all magic stones, the stone of wisdom, that promotes decay and growth of any form of life, the stone by which I could compose mountains of gold? Go on, do not molest me further.



(JUAN leaves silently; the LIGHT grows very dim; RIC. continues reading; ENTER JOSÉ.)  
JOSÉ (still invisible) Don Ricardo!—Don Ricardo!

(LIGHT growing)

RIC. Who is it?

JOSÉ (silently stepping forward) I am José, your poor uncle's and your servant.—My poor Don Ricardo!

RIC. Why do you disturb my peace?

JOSÉ, O, my poor Don Ricardo!

RIC. What is it, man? If you have any news for me, then speed it up.

JOSÉ Ah, my poor young master; your uncle and foster father, our beloved bishop of Salamanca, is gone forever. The last thoughts and blessings of the pious man were all for you. The whole city is mourning and everyone is thinking with deep sympathy of you. This letter is from the church-council of Salamanca.

RIC. (after having read) I'll call you later.

(EXIT JOSÉ)

RIC. Master!

ALCH. (stepping silently forward) My friend?

RIC. Read this.

ALCH. (reading) "Our most heartfelt condolence! The church-council, in recognition of your recent scientific contributions, hereby appoints you, pending the Pope's approval, successor of your late uncle's bishopric."—A message of sorrow, my son; and yet of comfort: What consolation, to continue and preserve your uncle's holy work!

RIC. I owe this honor to your teachings, my master.

ALCH. I did my best, my son. Now go, and be a father to Salamanca's people.

RIC. Not without your assistance, master!

ALCH. Don't fear, my son. You are wise and strong now. You do not need me any more.

RIC. Master, I never will be the bishop of Salamanca, unless you come with me.

ALCH. Come with you? Do you not know that I have spent my life here in this quiet, peaceful abode?

RIC. You shall abide from now on in the bishop's palace at Salamanca.

ALCH. I thank you, my son. But you know well that I could never leave this dear old home of mine.

RIC. And I cannot live without your guidance. You taught me many secrets, my master. But I am ignorant and helpless without you. Come with me, I beseech you. Come and try, do it for but a little while. And I shall prove my deepest gratitude to you. I swear it, I swear it.

ALCH. It's hard for me departing from this home; yet almost harder to resist you. I always have regarded you as my own son. It's hard for me to say "no" to my dear son.

RIC. O master, my everlasting gratitude to you!

(LIGHT out)

(LIGHT slowly growing; RICARDO as bishop of Salamanca and ALCHEMIST)

ALCH. This surely is the greatest day in Salamanca's history. It's for the first time that the Pope sends us the worthiest of his cardinals to visit the bishop of our town.

RIC. (looking outside) How well do our people celebrate the great occasion. The streets are all adorned with garlands, and from the windows wave the banners of our church. Thousands of gaily flickering candles will clear this night.

ALCH. Maybe this is a propitious moment to ask you a favor I long have thought to beg of you.

RIC. I shall be most happy to show at last the gratitude I owe you. Whatever you request, my master, is granted to you.

ALCH. It's for my late brother's only son for whom I speak. I have not seen him for many years, because he lived and taught in France. He is a fine scholar in Religion and Philosophy.

Now my dear nephew is longing to return home, to Spain, his fatherland.

RIC. (with suspicious jealousy) Is he initiated in the Magic Art?

ALCH. He never penetrated into this field as far as you, my bishop.

RIC. Well, what does he want?

ALCH. He seeks a position in our country. Will you please lend to him your help?

RIC. Why yes, of course. Your nephew shall be satisfied. The best of all available positions shall be his, as soon as there will be an opportunity for him.

ALCH. Thank you, my bishop.—It's time now for your audience with the cardinal (wants to withdraw).

RIC. Do not leave, my master. I need your presence here.

(ENTER the CARDINAL)

(RIC. stands up)

CARD. In the name of His Holiness, the Pope, I thank you for the honor of this audience.

RIC. The honor is all ours. We are so glad to have your Eminence as our guest.

CARD. The warm reception of your town, the comfort of my quarters that you provided, are no small proof of hospitality.

RIC. You are very gracious, indeed.

(CARD. and RIC. take seats)

CARD. His Holiness, the Pope, bids you his greetings. The Holy Father has always been a true admirer of your great discoveries the fame of which has reached the farthest corners of the world. His Holiness invites you by this written message, as well as through my mouth, to join us in the Vatican, appointing you a cardinal. Do you accept?

RIC. I do.

CARD. My heartiest congratulations. As for your vacant bishopric, the Holy Father wants you to dispose of it at your discretion.

RIC. I thank you. Please assure the Holy Father of my gratitude and my sincere devotion.

CARD. (standing up) I shall; you'll soon be able to do it yourself, in person, I hope (leaves).

(EXIT CARD.)

ALCH. O happy day! Happy for you,—

RIC. thanks to your teachings, master,—

ALCH. and most happy for my dear nephew too.

RIC. Your nephew?

ALCH. He will be a worthy successor of your bishopric.

RIC. (with surprise) Master—!

ALCH. You promised me—,

RIC. O yes, indeed, and I shall gladly help your nephew, now more than ever; but for the bishopric already I provided somebody else, you will understand, my mother's only brother. But do not worry, master. I keep the promise that I gave. Remind me of it in Rome, as often as you may.

ALCH. In Rome—?

RIC. Master, I never would be cardinal now, had it not been for you. I never could be one, should you not go with me.

ALCH. I am an old man, too old, indeed, to spend abroad the evening of my life.

RIC. (begging) Master!

ALCH. Many a year I taught you at my peaceful home. For you I left it. Many a year I stayed with you in Salamanca. Now, that you are a master in the magic arts, you do not need me any more.

RIC. I do, I do! I still feel miserable without your everpresent wisdom. It is a long journey to Rome, it's true. But I shall prove my everlasting gratitude. Master, I cannot exist without your guidance. Come with me, I beseech you, come with me!

ALCH. My son, my dear son, you are invincible.

RIC. Thanks, eternal thanks for coming with me to the Vatican!

(LIGHT out; LIGHT slowly on; a churchbell is ringing and soft organ music is being played; RICARDO as Cardinal at the Vatican, seated on a pulpit-chair, and the CARDINAL of the former scene, entering)

CARD. Two years ago, by order of our venerated Pope, whose glorious soul now rests in heavenly peace,—

RIC. amen!—

CARD. I asked the bishop of Salamanca to join us as a cardinal in this holy Vatican. It was the most fateful day in all my life; for when this morning from our conclave-chapel the white smoke unto heaven rose, in token of our concord votes, it signified to the expectant Christian world: the very one I greeted first two years ago in Salamanca, is now our chosen Pope.—God's visible benevolence is truly with you; deep secrets of Creation are constantly revealed to you; and to your wisdom it is granted to teach us many wonders of this earth. There is no worthier one than you (kneels before RIC).

RIC. God bless you, my cardinal.

CARD. (standing up) And now, may I invite you to receive in our sacristy the papal vestments and our fervent adoration?

RIC. I thank you, my cardinal.

CARD. The conclave and Rome's people are longing for your benediction.

RIC. I shall follow you, my cardinal.

(CARD. retires ceremoniously bowing towards RICARDO who stands up to follow slowly the CARD.; at this moment ENTER the ALCHEMIST)

ALCH. (bowing) Your Holiness,—

RIC. What do you desire, old man?

ALCH. Your blessings and the first papal token of your generosity.

RIC. (makes hastily the sign of blessing) What is your wish? Quickly! My time is limited.

ALCH. You gave me once a promise for my late brother's only son. Years have gone by. My nephew lost his hope to go back to Spain. I trust, you now invest upon this worthy man your vacant cardinal-seat.

RIC. Well I remember the promise I gave you. It shall be kept. But for the cardinal-seat I already chose another one, you will understand, my own nephew. And now, if you please, I have to go.

ALCH. Fulfill your promise, I beseech you!

RIC. Out of my way!

ALCH. You promised me eternal gratitude.

RIC. How dare you doubt my word?

ALCH. I sacrificed my happiness to you, my peaceful home, my country, I taught you all my science. You promised, you promised me your gratitude.

RIC. You miserable parasite. What could you give to me, who nourished you, ungrateful, all my life? who brought you from a dark hole to Salamanca's bishop-palace and to the holy Vatican in Rome? You taught me? I'll teach you! I'll throw you in the darkest dungeon of the Vatican for blaspheming the Representative of God.

ALCH. (kneeling) Mercy, have mercy, o Holy Father! Have mercy on this poor old man who for a moment lost his reason! Have mercy, have mercy . . . !

RIC. Stand up. God's mercy, that you implore, is infinite. I'll grant you absolution from your ghastly sin. Leave this holy Vatican at once. Go back to the obscure place from where you started.

ALCH. O my home, my dear old home, I shall see you again!

RIC. It's a long way for an old man to walk.

ALCH. Walk? Walk to Spain? O no, no, no, this cannot be!

RIC. You shall go barefoot, clad with sinner's robe, on this sweet pilgrimage.

ALCH. O pity, pity this old man!

RIC. Do you prefer the dungeon?

ALCH. I shall depart, I shall depart at once. Grant me some food, some loaf of bread at least, to save me from starvation on my way.

RIC. You are not worth a single crumb of bread, you loathsome creature, not a single crumb of it.

(ALCH. leaves)

(LIGHT out)

(LIGHT slowly on, but no longer bluish; it is the same light that illuminated the first scene, before the alchemist put Ricardo asleep.)

(RICARDO seated on the easy-chair, asleep. The ALCHEMIST is standing behind it, with his hands still on RICARDO's shoulders.)

ALCH. (shaking slowly his head) No, not a single crumb of bread. He is not worth a single crumb of it. (Skims with his hand over RICARDO's eyes and steps in front of him, pointing with his finger severely to the door.)

RIC. (awaking, staring at the ALCHEMIST's pointed finger) . . . what happened . . . ?

ALCH. Out! Out of here!

RIC. (understanding, covers his face with both hands and rushes out through the door.)

ALCH.—O God, what would be all wisdom without goodness? I thank Thee, o Lord, for Thou art wisdom AND goodness.

(Curtain)

End of the Play.

"FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR GLOBAL WAR AND GLOBAL PEACE!"

## *Three Months with the A.S.T.P. Teaching Italian*

*(Continued from January Issue)*

VITTORIO CERONI

*Hunter College, New York City*

AFTER all we do not study a language merely because certain people use a different vocabulary. It is relatively easy to understand the words of any language, but how difficult it is and how delicate to understand and to share the spirit of the people expressed through the language, the spirit of the language which is embodied in the religion, the traditions and the literature of the people. Words are merely tools for forging and molding ideas and stirring emotions. As soon as the words are known, both teachers and students, tourists and AMGOT must become conscious and clever in the art of asking questions and giving satisfactory answers. It was recently reported by the papers that in an Italian occupied town the people were rioting for bread. One of our AMGOTS ventured to answer with the few words that he had learned, corresponding perhaps to the swearing customary in his own hometown, and caused chaos in the riot. Far from asserting that the Italians do not swear, I have to state that even swearing has its own individuality and particular conceptions and feelings in the various nations of the world.

Since the possession of a spoken language is the possession of a soul, even adults who begin the study of a language pass through the stage of a child language soul. It was with youthful enjoyment, with naïveté that my big soldiers loved to prepare for me sentences in Italian and they used to surprise me with mottos and thoughts of different types and feelings written on the board before my entrance. They had done their best and still there were grammatical harmonies and literary finesses to achieve. They soon became aware that in order to speak a language it is not sufficient to translate word for word with a dictionary.

The experiment of teaching the soldiers with the impelling need of teaching the most in the shortest time has raised more vividly than ever the discussion between the theorists and the empirists. Those who sustain the thorough knowledge of grammar as the necessary basis for speaking were deprived of the time for the study of grammar. The empirists who believe in learning a language by speaking it, found that the intelligent adult student demanded many rules of grammar needed to express the thought. Italian people who study English do not worry about grammar because they happily find that English grammar is so simple in comparison with the Italian, that it is relatively easy to speak English correctly. But the English speaking person who studies Italian soon realizes how many rules of grammar are indispensable to the formulation of simplest sentences. An American



soldier can say: FIGHT, and by the simple intonation of his voice everybody will understand whether he means: the fight—I fight—we fight—do fight!—let us fight!—I will fight—I shall fight—; in Italian the intonation of the voice is powerfully helped by the difference of the words: combattimento—(io)combatto—(noi)combattiamo—combatti!, combattete!—combattiamo!—combatterò—devo combattere—. Grammar is responsible for all of this.

When the Italians say and sing that their language is the language of love, they are not boasting. Who, knowing English and Italian well, would deny that the verbs TO HATE and TO KILL are much more idiomatically used in English than in Italian? No Italian would conceive a song with the words: "Sometimes I love you, sometimes I hate you, and when I hate you it is because I love you." That author indeed could have completed his conclusions with the second part: "And when I love you it is because I hate you," which may seem, but is not crazier than the first part.—The Italian poet Pascoli would arise from his tomb to repeat: "E l'odio è stolto, ombre dal volo breve," "Hatred is foolish—madness, o passing shadows"; and Manzoni states about himself: "Spregio, non odio mai," "I can despise, but I never hate"; and Ariosto laments against "Ingiustissimo Amore"

Da chi disia il mio amor tu mi richiami,  
E chi m'ha in odio vuoi ch'adori et ami.

translated by William Stewart Rose:

"Her I abandon who my love desires,  
While she who hates, respect and love inspires"

which may seem a puzzle on love and hatred, but how far from being crude and primitive. I should not have compared Pascoli, Manzoni, Ariosto with a writer of popular songs: but Ariosto, Manzoni and Pascoli in their time meant to become popular, while some writers of popular songs of to-day aspire to be the classics of any century.

One day in the peace of my classroom at Hunter College, two charming young ladies met and after exchanging what I thought were the usual greetings with their sweet voices, I heard one telling the other: "Oh, I would kill you for that!" I promptly raised my eyes and bewildered exclaimed: "Oh no please, do not do that!"—The two faces sparkled with a gentle laughter and I felt like a hero: I had saved one's life!—I still remember that during my bachelorhood, while I was learning English and frequenting various social rendez-vous, I was at first concerned with the number of people, especially women, exclaiming so frequently: "Oh I'd die! . . . Isn't that killing? . . ." and mind you they were not talking sadly: they were "*awfully glad*" for something that they had "*enjoyed terribly*."

Holding my conviction that in a language there is a soul, I concluded that there are souls much more difficult to understand than any language, when I heard the following words in music:

"Finally found a fellow almost completely divine,  
 But his vocabulary is killing this romance of mine!  
 He says, 'Murder,' he says, every time we kiss he says, 'Murder,' he says,  
 At a time like this he says, 'Murder,' he says; Is that the language of love?"

Another refrain of a popular song is representative of poetry in very vague language:

"There is something about a soldier, that is fine, fine, fine."

In an Italian song more than fifty years old, the soldier sings that everything he has is so meaningful and so dear to him, and every stanza names a different object from the feather in his cap to the nails in his shoes, and for every object the soldier expresses a different feeling. The richness of words, ideas and emotions of that naïve song make the soldiers sing happily for a long time, and makes their sweethearts echo to it with dreams.—Is it not clearer now what is "something about a soldier, that is fine, fine, fine"?

Do not accuse me of "murdering" certain English idioms; I remember my disappointment when I learned the name of a very delicate flower: in Italian we whisper its name word by word, like a confidence: "Non . . . Non ti scordar . . . di me!" Saying the English name in the same way one would get a very strange effect: "Forget . . . Forget me . . . not!"—Would you believe that the very word "murder" of an English idiom is sometimes replaced in Italian by the very word "beautiful"? "He got away with murder!" "L'ha scampata bella!"—And when the Italian language says with so much grace: "Prendere due piccioni ad una fava" "To catch two pigeons with one grain," would not the English language say: "To *kill* two birds with one stone"?—This language even kills what is inconceivable to kill: "Congress to kill soldiers' vote."—And how does the English language give you the idea of a "via chiusa (closed street)"? "Dead end."—For the irony of it, in music, the Italian language calls an effect "morendo" "dying," but I heard a music teacher inform his pupils that "morendo" meant "softer." He was a teacher of Italian origin.—The fact is that the Italian words "odiare, uccidere, morire, assassinare" are much stronger in their meaning and in their use than the English correspondent: "to hate, to kill, to die, to murder," including also "awfully" and "terribly."—An Italian proverb says: "Chi giuoca col fuoco, si brucia," "Who plays with fire, gets burned."

It was very evident instead that the words "licenza (for furlough), casa (home), famiglia (family), amore (love)," had immediately for all those soldiers their warm human appeal. All in all languages were not built for soldiers at war, but for men pursuing their happiness. Especially to beginners Italian appears to be a language that must be spoken with enthusiasm, *con amore*.—I remember last August, when Sicily was completely occupied by Allied liberators, one of my soldiers greeted me with the exclamation: "La Sicilia è nostra!"—Praising the enthusiasm, which certainly meant "we have liberated all of Sicily," I replied: "Well, you see,

your words mean—Sicily is ours—, and for an American soldier it is a very simple way to put it, good only for one who knows merely the elements of a language; but poverty of a language must not mislead thoughts: Sicily belongs to the Sicilians.

The future mission of liberators was well understood by the majority. The day of my departure, when I greeted a Polish soldier who had been one of the best students of Italian, and told him: "Arrivederci, private, perhaps in Italy!" promptly he answered: "By that time I hope you may hear from me from Poland!"—Certainly the mission in which the United States has engaged is worldwide!

I taught that in Italian the emphatic repetition of an adjective or an adverb means enthusiasm, feeling and superlative degree, and often could be replaced by it: bello, bello! means bellissimo! (very beautiful), bravo, bravo! stands for bravissimo!—The next morning, while I was walking up the hill, I saw a class of my students marching towards me: I noticed that something was fermenting; when we met, I heard a chorus of enthusiastic voices: "Buon giorno, buon giorno!" (good day, good day!). Was not that a daring application of a lesson? They meant so well. "Buonissimo . . . and perhaps they would have even said: "giornissimo! (the best *dayest*!)"

Another day I remember I challenged my class; I said: "Privates, I heard you marching up the hill and counting martially: one, two, three, four; one, two, three, four; . . . could you tell me why you count up to four? . . . No answer . . . Well I may just as well teach you that in Italy the soldiers marching count only up to two: Unò, duè, unò, duè, . . . because they have only two legs." I had said it very simply, but it scored more laughter than I expected.—And when I told my soldiers: "and remember privates, in Italy do not fall in love!" they were puzzled: was I joking or serious? Far from it, I was teaching an idiom; the Italians would not like to use the verb "to fall in" in connection with love; they use it in connection with traps. To fall has inevitably a direction from up—down, and most frequently is the consequence of mistakes, therefore it is not complimentary to figure love as an abasement or an error. The Italians say: "innamorare" to start in love. When love is a flame, according to Dante: "è nata a salire" "ever upward strives."—If you fall, you remain flat, you cannot move, you are ashamed of it, but if you start something, well, you can happily start many things in many places." Again the soldiers laughed, but I know, I really had said too much this time.

I have already been through three wars and I know very well that soldiers are human. In my civilian clothes, during my spare time, according to my professional interests, very often I visited bookstores, music halls, churches, and very soon I noticed that I was very often meeting the same soldiers in the bookstores, in the music halls, in the churches. I even found that a soldier, in his free time, was minding the baby of another soldier, to practice in advance what he had to perform during his next furlough.

The soldier who is placed in a language course realizes that the immediate aim for which the Government pays, is to provide him for emergencies of action in the present global war, but my very definite impression was that the intelligent soldier, while making the effort to learn 300 or 600 words of the basic language to be used to-day in action, wanted to take advantage and learn and store the 3000 or 6000 words that he could use tomorrow and for a peaceful lifetime in the human relations of brotherhood and cooperation. One soldier wished to learn classic quotations, another asked the words of the Italian lullabies.

A teacher of languages, when he or she is really a teacher, he or she wants to be an educator. During the discussion of many educational, social and moral problems, it grieved me to hear too often as an answer two expressions which I am glad are not idiomatic in Italian: "*À la guerre comme à la guerre*," which in Italy and in America is said and understood in French, and "*C'est la guerre!*" which is well translated in English: "That's war!" but is not idiomatic in Italian with the words: "*È la guerra!*"

To the soldiers occupying foreign territories a booklet is distributed recommending the respect of the traditions of the different peoples. Soldiers for their most probable future contacts must be educated to evaluate and respect political and religious manifestations of the various peoples. We must not overlook and forget that if in the face of political polemics and religious objections we will accustom ourselves to renounce all freedom of expression and conclude merely: *À la guerre comme à la guerre*, or *That's war!*, we certainly end with a very poor, very unsatisfactory, very irrational answer. Language is studied to come to clearer understanding, not to conceal sincere thoughts.

Talking of the spirit, the power, and the influence of a language, such an answer could be rationally accepted only if we were living to make wars, to produce wars, to continue wars, to teach wars. But if we expect someday to have peace, if we want peace, and some day we will, we shall have peace, then everything for which we will say: *That was war!* will be only lamented and sadly regretted.—As long as we call this war—Global War—and we overlook or we omit the qualification—terrible war, horrible war—, we may forget that the latter is reality until it will be too late to remember it, and the global war will destroy the globe leaving on its surface only its deadly signature—War—. Taking into serious consideration the Italian proverb: "*Ne uccide più la lingua che la spada*" (The pen 'language' is mightier than the sword), how soon and with which language will someone destroy the war, so that the globe may again rotate in the happy light of the fertilizing sun and in the peaceful repose of the twinkling of millions of stars, and men may resume their songs of love and peace?

# Wartime Development in Modern-Language Achievement Testing

WALTER V. KAULFERS

Associate Professor and Consultant in Evaluation,  
Foreign Language Area Schools, Stanford University, California

(Author's summary.—The theory and practice of aural-comprehension and oral-fluency testing illustrated with concrete examples.)

IF THE questionnaire submitted to foreign-language teachers by the Modern Foreign Language Study in 1925–1926 were sent out again today, it is doubtful if reading would again be rated as the central, paramount objective by as large a number as approved the recommendations of the Coleman Report.<sup>1</sup> Since 1925 even the size of the world has changed for all practical purposes. Today, the most distant point on the globe is only 60 hours from home by fast airplane. In 1925 most teachers listened to radio-programs, if at all, only through headphones, and the static from local stations was often as great as that accompanying modern broadcasts from the South Pole. Today, the pronouncements of dictators, and the coronation or abdication of kings, can be heard in almost every home in America with greater clarity than local broadcasts in 1925. To maintain that foreign-language teaching can be functional if guided by recommendations suited to an entirely different set of conditions, however recent, would not be an unusual, but certainly a doubtfully sane reaction of the teaching profession.

Recent articles in this and other foreign-language publications give evidence of a growing realization that to serve present and very obvious future needs, modern foreign-language teaching must stress the aural-oral abilities more than ever before. The short-wave radio is increasingly inspiring a popular demand for ability to understand the spoken language, while growing American participation in world affairs is already creating a similar, if not greater, demand for ability actually to speak the foreign tongue. To insist that the adoption of ability to understand and speak the language should henceforth be the central and paramount objective of modern foreign-language teaching in elementary and secondary schools, and in lower division college classes, by no means implies that reading and writing need be thrown into discard. The proposal represents only a marked shift in primary emphasis—a putting of first things first, not from the viewpoint of method or subject-matter, but from the viewpoint of *life needs outside the school*.

<sup>1</sup> Algernon Coleman, *The Teaching of Modern Foreign Languages in the United States*, The Macmillan Co., New York, 1929, p. 170. Based on questionnaires sent to teachers in 1925–1926.

Harry Kurz, "The Future of Modern Language Teaching," in *The Modern Language Journal*, Vol. XXVII, No. 7, 460–469. (November, 1943.) Report of Rockefeller Foundation Conference on modern foreign-language teaching.



Although recent textbooks and courses of study show a considerable reorientation toward the aural-oral objective, the greatest progress to date had been made in the Army language and area schools. Considering the crucial language needs of trainees preparing for service in foreign lands, the military authorities here, as elsewhere, wisely insist on "putting first things first." The primary concern is ability to understand the spoken language and to speak the foreign tongue. In elementary and intermediate courses, reading and writing are introduced, if at all, only in the service of these paramount abilities. The urgency of the world situation does not permit of erudite theorizing in English about the grammatical structure of the language for two years before attempting to converse or to understand telephone conversations.

Moreover, the language needs of the military are in certain respects fairly specific. To a considerable extent they resemble, at the elementary level, the routine language needs of an American who is preparing himself for independent travel on business abroad. The primary concern is with securing information, giving directions or requests for services, and communicating information intelligibly. In keeping with the principle of "first things first," the less essential variations and subtleties of parlor-cultured conversation are reserved for more advanced groups.

To date, the program has reached the evaluation stage. As consultant in tests and measurements to the language and area schools at Stanford, the writer has been faced with the task of planning tests to measure progress in the new-type programs. To be practical for use with relatively large groups of trainees, the progress tests have to conform to certain specifications:

1. They must measure levels of aural-oral *readiness* in terms that can be translated into practical terms.
2. They must be scorable by machine as far as possible in order to economize on labor costs.
3. They must not require examinees from elementary and intermediate classes either to read or write the foreign language. (Tests that require ability to read and write the language would obviously be as much tests of reading comprehension or composition as of aural comprehension or oral fluency, and hence almost impossible to interpret accurately.)
4. The nature of the individual test items should be such as to provide specific, recognizable evidence of the examinee's *readiness to perform in a life-situation* where lack of ability to understand and speak the language extemporaneously might be a serious handicap to safety and comfort, or to the effective execution of military responsibilities.
5. The items of the test must be graded or scaled in difficulty to provide a kind of ladder by which the level, quality, and scope or range of the examinee's ability in language can be gauged.
6. Scores on the measurement scale must be interpreted in terms of

"performance norms" or statements of what an examinee who reaches a certain point on the scale can specifically be expected to *do* with the foreign language in real life communication situations.

7. The tests must not be guilty of the "correlation fallacy," the common delusion that a certain level of ability on a pencil-and-paper test of vocabulary, grammar, or reading comprehension can automatically be interpreted to mean a corresponding level of ability to understand the spoken language, or to speak the language fluently. This specification obviously invalidates the use of practically all existing standardized language tests for purposes of measuring aural-comprehension and oral-fluency.

8. They must permit of a uniform, standardized administration,—for example, from recorded discs on tone-control talking machines.

The measurement of ability in aural comprehension and discrimination in language usage presented few difficulties. Following are examples of testing techniques that yield responses readily scorable by machine, that permit of standardized administration by means of recordings broadcast via loudspeakers, and that do not require examinees to read or write the foreign language.

#### Aural Comprehension

The examiner will read a series of statements in Spanish to which the English answers can be found among the numbered groups of expressions on your examination sheet. After the examiner has read statement number 2 *twice*, put an X in the square opposite the correct English answer in group 2, and so forth. For example

The examiner reads the following twice.

0. *¿Cuántos días hay en una semana?*

*¿Cuántos días hay en una semana?*

On your own examination paper, put an X in the box before the correct English answer.

0. ☐ a. 365  
☐ b. 30  
☒ c. 7  
☐ d. 100

(All multiple choice answers to be in English on Examination sheets.)

#### Language Usage

The examiner will make a statement in two different ways, a right way and a wrong way. As soon as the examiner has finished speaking, put an X in the box *before* the number of the exercise that shows whether the first way (labeled a) or the second way (labeled b) is the correct one.

For example:

The examiner will make the following statement in two ways, labeled a and b.

0. a. *Es muy buen tiempo hoy.*

b. *Hace muy buen tiempo hoy.*

On your examination paper, put an X in the box labeled b to show that statement b in group number 0 is correct.

0. ☐ a.  
☒ b.

More than 2-response items are invalid for dictation in this type of aural test because of the excessive strain they place upon the examinee's auditory memory. Two-response items more nearly correspond to normal life-situations in the degree of auditory memory involved, but must be corrected for possible guessing. Hence a minimum of 50 items are usually required to permit of the application of correction formulas.

Needless to say, a score on an aural-comprehension test would be only of intra-mural academic interest if it failed to provide an answer to the question: "How well can the examinee understand literate native speakers of the language in real-life situations?" Consequently, the test must be tried out on an adequate number of experimental cases whose varying abilities are already known from outside sources. The scores made by this group can then be translated into "norms of performance," as illustrated below. Obviously, the norms are formulated primarily in terms of abilities that are of value to servicemen abroad. An aural comprehension test designed to measure the comprehension of a waiter applying for a position in a first-class cosmopolitan restaurant might be defined in very different terms, since participation in eloquent conversational repartee with patrons might as often result in dismissal as in promotion.

#### **Performance scale for measuring aural-comprehension**

*Score*

*Norms*

- 0. Cannot understand the spoken language.
- 1-5 Can catch a word here and there and occasionally guess the general meaning through inference.
- 6-10 Can understand the ordinary questions and answers relating to the *routine* transactions involved in independent travel abroad.
- 11-15 Can understand ordinary conversation on common, non-technical topics, with the aid of occasional repetition or paraphrastic re-statements.
- 16-20 Can understand popular radio talks, talking-pictures, ordinary telephone conversations, and minor dialectal variations without obvious difficulty.

#### **The Measurement of Oral Fluency**

As compared with the measurement of aural-comprehension, described in the first installment of this report, the testing of oral fluency presented unusual problems. The following paragraphs analyze the difficulties besetting the construction and administration of valid and reliable oral-fluency tests, and discuss the theory of fluency testing in terms of a sample, partially standardized scale designed for Army trainees enrolled in the Stanford Language Area Schools.

#### **Construction of oral-fluency tests:**

1. It is obvious that an examination requiring the examinee to read or

write the foreign language would be invalid as an oral-fluency test. *It simply cannot be taken for granted that ability to express oneself in writing is correlated with a like ability to speak the language extemporaneously.* Ability in the "silent" uses of language probably correlates significantly with *potential* ability to speak it, but pencil-and-paper tests do not measure the factor of *oral readiness* which is the very basis of fluency. This fact automatically places the oral-fluency scale in the category of individual performance tests, like the Simon-Binet Intelligence Test, that permit of the examination of only one candidate at a time.

2. Since individual performance tests are usually very time consuming, the oral-fluency examinations must be long enough to allow the candidate to demonstrate his ability, yet short enough to be practical for use with a relatively large number of examinees.

This fact suggests the desirability of scaling the rungs of the test ladder in terms of "plateaus" consisting of groups of three items of equal difficulty as determined by actual tryouts on an adequate number of cases. It can then be assumed that if the examinee fails to score on three successive items, he has reached his level of performance, and need not be examined further. This device is effective in preventing the useless expenditure of time on examinees who would obviously not score on the more difficult sections of the test. Less than five minutes, however, are seldom adequate for the individual measurement of oral fluency on the part of intermediate and advanced students.

Since an average of five minutes per examinee requires a considerable testing time when large groups are involved, it is necessary to space the examinations over a period of four or five days, depending upon the number of competent examiners available. Such spacing of examinations is feasible without serious danger of invalidating the test, for it can reasonably be assumed that true oral fluency does not increase appreciably in five or even ten days. Wherever such spacing is attempted, however, four or five equated forms of the test must be available for alternate administration to prevent coaching of prospective examinees by those who have already taken the examination.

3. Inasmuch as an oral-fluency test is only of academic interest unless its scores can be translated into meaningful life-terms, it is important to select test items that measure both the quality and range of the examinee's *ability to perform in very specific real-life situations.* For purposes of administrative convenience and the subsequent interpretation of test-data, it is helpful to think of such essential areas of language fluency as the following:

Ability to secure essential information, i.e., *to ask questions*

Ability to communicate essential information solicited in the foreign language—i.e., *to answer questions*

Ability to give essential directions, requests for services, and polite commands.

Within each of these areas, scope and range of performance can be measured through the use of items that gradually increase in vocabulary and syntactical range, starting with words and constructions of high frequency of occurrence, to those of relatively low frequency. This validation of the vocabulary and syntactical content of the test items, however, is not the starting point in the building of the test. In other words, the items are not written to illustrate vocabulary and constructions of high or low frequency, but to test the candidate's *readiness* to perform in varying extra-curricular situations that make different demands upon the individual's oral resources in the language. Those situations that involve words and constructions of relatively low frequency of occurrence are naturally reserved for the more difficult or higher sections of the scale, and can thus be interpreted to give an indication of the scope of the examinee's readiness to perform in language.

#### Validation

Both the reliability of the scale and its validity can be computed by conventional statistical methods. In order to provide norms that can be translated into operational terms, however, the test must be administered to a considerable number of bilingual subjects whose oral efficiency in real life situations is already known from outside evidence, such as types of professional employment abroad, etc. The scores made by these bilingual subjects can then be used to provide norms that can be interpreted in terms of quality and range of ability to speak the language in actual life.

#### Administration:

1. Wherever possible, the oral-fluency test should be given by educated examiners who have a first-hand acquaintance with the foreign language by virtue of recent residence abroad. Non-native examiners should guard against the danger of accepting as correct only the language stereotypes found in dogmatic textbooks on grammar, or among a small coterie of experts who make their living exclusively through language, and are therefore not always good examples of normal current usage.

2. If ratings assigned by different examiners are to be comparable, the fluency test must be administered only by those who are thoroughly familiar with the scale values on the scoring key, and with the technique of giving the test. Such competence is difficult to attain merely from reading or memorizing directions. No one should expect to secure a valid or reliable score without having had practice in administering the test to four or more trial cases under supervision in circumstances enabling him to compare his experimental ratings with those of skilled examiners who have an expert command of the language. Phonographic recordings of different types of performance on the fluency test can be used for practice, and the trial ratings compared with those given for the recorded performances by experienced examiners.



3. The tests should be given *privately* in quiet but comfortable and light, pleasant surroundings.

4. The deportment of the examiner should suggest cordial, but business-like informality. The complete absence of stereotyped mannerisms suggestive of "executive frigidity" or "pompous austerity" will help set the examinee at ease, and thus enable him to do his best. Examinees that show signs of tenseness or nervousness should be given time to get adjusted to the testing situation and environment before official testing starts. If the examinee is not already acquainted with the examiner, a few minutes of informal conversation in English (for elementary students) or the foreign language (for the intermediate and advanced students) relative to the candidate's interests in Spanish, experiences in studying the language, etc., may precede the formal testing.

Before beginning the formal testing, the examiner should try the candidate out on three or four simple practice items, and give whatever advice or encouragement is necessary to enable the examinee to perform to advantage: e.g., "Try to answer in a complete sentence each time." "Can you speak a little louder?" This tryout is especially important if the examination is to be recorded, or if the scoring is to be done by someone other than the examiner.

On the basis of the candidate's reactions on the trial items, the skilled examiner can *start at the point on the scale which in his judgment is only slightly below the examinee's level of ability*. This procedure makes for considerable economy in testing time. Obviously, when the examiner's judgment is in error, it will be necessary to work backwards on the scale temporarily to the point where the candidate's confidence is restored.

5. Once official testing starts, the time-limits should be rigorously observed. It is the examiner's responsibility to see to it that the candidate does not spend too much time on any one test item. After the time-limit for the item has expired, the examiner should simply say: "Very well, let's go on to the next one."

6. Except for necessary reminders that the examinee respond in complete sentences, or speak a little louder, all coaching, prodding, and giving of suggestive clues or hints must obviously be avoided. So also should comments regarding the quality of the candidate's responses. The candidate should not be able to tell from the examiner's reactions or expressions whether his response is excellent or poor. If the candidate's nervous discomfort is so great, however, that he feels like giving up, the examiner may add a brief word of encouragement, provided that he has reason to believe that the examinee underestimates himself. These exhortations must obviously be confined to such remarks as the following in order to avoid the danger of invalidating the testing procedure or time limits:

"Just do the best you can. No one is expected to answer every question perfectly. Now let's try this one."

If the examinee scores 0 on three successive items on the test, however, he should be regarded as having reached his level on the scale, and the examiner should proceed at once to item No. 1 on the next part of the examination. This procedure obviously requires that the examination be a "ladder test," which increases in difficulty with every successive group of three items, as explained above under *Construction of Oral-fluency Tests*.

7. Scoring of responses should not be done within the examinee's range of vision, for this procedure tends to "freeze" the candidate, to distract him, or to cause self-consciousness to handicap his performance. If the test is administered by a recorded voice from a loud-speaker or tone-controlled talking machine, the candidate may be seated facing the reproducing instrument, and the scorer at a desk closely behind him, or at his side, separated by a cloth screen.

If the test is not administered by machine, it is desirable to have one examiner administer the test, and a concealed scorer rate the responses.

A complete recording of the examinee's responses naturally makes possible a more reliable scoring of the examination from mechanical play-backs at a later time. Since relatively inexpensive paper discs are serviceable for this purpose, the cost of this procedure is not too great to permit of its use in fluency examinations designed for advanced students in public secondary schools.

8. The administration of the test can be greatly facilitated by informing the prospective examinees, as far as possible in advance, concerning the exact nature of the examination, and the best ways to score to advantage. Wherever practicable, the instructor may administer sample oral-fluency tests informally in class, using items that parallel, but do not duplicate, those used in the official examination. This practice will help prospective examinees feel at ease during the actual examination.

The sample test, with directions for scoring and interpreting results is reproduced below. The information obtained from the questionnaire will be of value to the examiner in validating the test, and in estimating the point on the scale where testing of the examinee should begin.

### Aural-Oral Proficiency Test In Spanish

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last name first) (Month Day Year)

Sex \_\_\_\_\_ Date of examination \_\_\_\_\_  
(M. or F.)

Draw a circle around the *nearest number of semesters* of Spanish taken in school:

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Over 12
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----	---------

Check the following statements with an X only if they hold true for you:

- ☐ 1. One or more members of my family often speak Spanish at home.
- ☐ 2. I have lived or traveled in a Spanish-speaking country for more than three months.
- ☐ 3. I have earned money through work requiring me to speak and understand Spanish.
- ☐ 4. I sometimes speak Spanish with friends.

From actual experience in Speaking Spanish, I am certain that

- ☐ 5. No one could tell my Spanish apart from that of a Spanish-speaking native.  
☐ 6. A Spanish-speaking native would understand me without difficulty.  
☐ 7. A Spanish-speaking native could easily tell that Spanish is not my mother tongue.  
☐ 8. I can speak enough Spanish to get around comfortably in a Spanish-speaking country without the help of an interpreter.  
☐ 9. It is hard for me to understand Spanish-speaking natives unless they speak slowly and distinctly.

Do not write below this line

Oral-Fluency Rating	
	Scope                      Quality
Part I    Securing services	B                      2.0
Part II   Asking for information	B                      1.9
Part III   Giving information	B                      2.4
*Median oral-fluency rating	B                      2.0

#### Scope of Oral Performance

The examinee can speak Spanish within the limits checked in the left-hand column with the degree of fluency checked in the column to the right.

- ( ) A. Can make known only a few essential wants in set phrases or sentences.  
 (X) B. Can give and secure the routine information required in independent travel abroad.  
 ( ) C. Can discuss the common topics and interests of daily life extemporaneously.  
 ( ) D. Can converse extemporaneously on any topic within the range of his knowledge or experience.

#### Quality of Oral Performance

- ( ) 0. *Unintelligible or no response*

A literate native would not understand what the speaker is saying, or would be *confused* or *mislead*.

- ( ) 1. *Partially intelligible*

A literate native might be able to *guess* what the speaker is *trying* to say. The response is either incomplete, or exceedingly hard to understand because of poor pronunciation or usage.

- (X) 2. *Intelligible but labored*

A literate native would understand what the speaker is saying, but would be conscious of his efforts in speaking the language. The delivery is hesitating, or regressive, but does not contain amusing or misleading errors in pronunciation or usage.

- ( ) 3. *Readily intelligible*

A literate native would readily understand what the speaker is saying, and would not be able to identify the speaker's particular foreign nationality.

\* Record, separately for scope and quality, the rating that falls between the highest and lowest ratings on the three parts.

## ORAL-FLUENCY TEST

## Part I: Securing services

*Directions to test administrators*

Try out the examinee informally on the following items. Make sure that he understands that he is to speak in complete sentences, yet as directly as possible:

"How would you tell a Spanish-speaking native *to please speak in English? to give you the name of that building across the street?*"

Start the examination at a point that is within the examinee's comfortable reach. Score each response with an X in the proper column according to the *Directions for Scoring* below. (See also the definitions corresponding to the numbered columns in *Quality of Performance* scale above.)

If the test is not given by means of recordings, administer only *one* test item in each group of three, unless the examinee misses it. In the latter case, administer the remaining items in the triad. In any case, do not wait more than 15 seconds for any reply. If the examinee cannot phrase an answer within fifteen seconds after hearing the question, go on to another item saying: "Very well; now let's try this one." Stop the examination at the point where the examinee misses *three items in succession*, and go on to the next part.

*Directions to examinees*

(May be recorded on discs)

Since this is a test to measure how well people can talk Spanish, try to speak in complete sentences, but as directly as possible. Do *not* try to translate, but to get the *idea* across in any form of Spanish that you consider correct and easily understandable. Always try to say something, even if you must guess.

Now imagine yourself talking to a Spanish-speaking native abroad. How would you tell him to do the following things? Start answering as soon as you have heard the directions for number one. Here it is:

Number one: How would you tell a Spanish-speaking native

	0	1	2	3	
A	( )	( )	(X)	( )	1. to speak English?
	( )	( )	( )	(X)	2. to open the window?
	( )	( )	( )	(X)	3. to close the door?
	( )	( )	(X)	( )	4. to come in?
	( )	( )	(X)	( )	5. to wait here?
	( )	(X)	( )	( )	6. to get a doctor?
B	(X)	( )	( )	( )	7. to take you to the military hospital?
	( )	( )	( )	(X)	8. to come back at three this afternoon?
	( )	( )	(X)	( )	9. to let you have a room with bath?
	( )	(X)	( )	( )	10. to let you know in the morning?
	( )	( )	( )	(X)	11. to show you his passport?
	( )	( )	(X)	( )	12. to change a ten-dollar bill?

"From here on the test items will be given twice. Answer as soon as you have heard the items repeated. *Number thirteen:* How would you tell a Spanish-speaking native

	0	1	2	3	
C	(X)	( )	( )	( )	13. to ask his wife if she would like to go along?
	(X)	( )	( )	( )	14. to ask the hotel clerk to hold a room for you?
	(X)	( )	( )	( )	15. to find out how long ago the train left?

- 0 1 2 3
- D { ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 16. to look for someone who can speak German and French?
- ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 17. to find out how long Mr. García has been working here?
- ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 18. to be careful if he doesn't want someone to fall and hurt himself.

(a)	1	2+	5+	4=	S. T. 12	Add horizontally to get <i>sum total</i> in columns 0, 1, 2, 3; up to point where examinee misses three items in succession. $1 \div 12$ .
(b)	$\times 1$	$\times 2$	$\times 3$			Multiply each entry in (a) to get (c);
(c)	2+	10+	12=	24		add sum of products horizontally, and then
				$\div 12$		divide sum in (c) by S. T. in (a) to get
				2.0		QUALITY QUOTIENT.
				B		Indicate letter (A, B, C, D) corresponding to highest point on scale reached with a rating of 1 or better.

SCOPE OF PERFORMANCE

## Part II: Asking for information

## Directions to test administrators

Same as for Part I. Try out the examinee informally on the following items, with a view to starting the test at a point that is within his comfortable reach:

"How would you ask a Spanish-speaking native *what his name is?* *How long he has been living here?*"

## Directions to examinees

(Recorded on disc)

If you were with a Spanish-speaking native who could not understand English, how would you *ask* him for the following information? Ask the question in any way that you think is correct and easily understandable. Guess, if you are not sure.

Here is number one:

How would you ask a Spanish speaking native

- 0 1 2 3
- A { ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 1. What time it is?
- ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 2. Where the military hospital is?
- ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 3. If he is Spanish?
- ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 4. At what time the train left?
- ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 5. How much the tickets cost?
- ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 6. On which street the Grand Hotel is?
- B { ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 7. If he has been living here long?
- ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 8. Whether he knows a good restaurant?
- ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 9. Where one can buy American newspapers?
- ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 10. If he would like to have dinner with you?
- ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 11. If he knows a doctor named Ortega?
- ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) 12. If one is allowed to smoke here?



From here on each test item will be given twice. Answer as soon as you have heard the item repeated. Here is *number thirteen*:

- |   | 0   | 1   | 2   | 3   |   |
|---|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| C | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | 13. What time he expects you to meet him?                               |
|   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | 14. If it will be necessary for you to bring your passport with you?    |
|   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | 15. If anyone phoned regarding the vacant apartment?                    |
| D | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | 16. What he would advise you to do if the train should be delayed?      |
|   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | 17. What he thinks of the plan to build a highway over the mountains?   |
|   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | 18. What made him think that you had just come from Seville?            |
|   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | 19. Whether the older or the younger daughter went to school in Madrid? |
|   | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) | 20. If it wouldn't be best to wait for Mr. and Mrs. Moreno to return?   |

(a)		+	+	=	S. T.	Add horizontally to get <i>sum total</i> in columns 0, 1, 2, 3; up to point where examinee misses three items in succession.
(b)	×1	×2	×3			Multiply each entry in (a) to get (c);
(c)	+	+	=			add sum of products horizontally, and then
				÷		divide sum in (c) by S. T. in (a) to get
						QUALITY QUOTIENT.
SCOPE OF PERFORMANCE						Indicate letter (A, B, C, D) corresponding to highest point on scale reached with a rating of 1 or better.

### Part III. Giving information

#### Directions to test administrators

Same as for Part I. Try out the examinee informally on the following questions with a view to starting the examination at a point that is within his comfortable reach:

¿Cómo se llama Ud?

¿Ha viajado Ud. alguna vez por España?

#### Directions to examinees

(Recordable on discs)

Here is a test of ability to answer questions in Spanish. Each Spanish question will be asked *twice*. As soon as you have heard the question repeated, *answer it in a complete sentence in Spanish, but as directly as possible*. Always try to say something, even if you have to guess at the question or answer. Do not be surprised if the voices on the record change.

Scope	Quality					
	0	1	2	3		
A	( )	( )	( )	( )	1. ¿Es Ud. español?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	2. ¿Dónde vive Ud?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	3. ¿Habla Ud. italiano?	
B	( )	( )	( )	( )	4. ¿Qué fiesta se celebra el primero de enero?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	5. ¿Cuántos Estados hay en los Estados Unidos de Norteamérica?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	6. ¿Qué día de la semana será mañana?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	7. ¿Qué año es éste?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	8. ¿En qué año se descubrió el Nuevo Mundo?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	9. ¿En qué ciudad se hallan los edificios más altos del mundo?	
C	( )	( )	( )	( )	10. ¿Se pone el sol en el occidente o en el oriente?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	11. ¿Sabe Ud. manejar un avión?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	12. Por regla general, ¿cuáles cuestan más en los hoteles: las habitaciones que dan a la calle, o las habitaciones interiores?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	13. ¿Acaba Ud. de venir a este país?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	14. ¿Qué tal le gustaría viajar por Sud América?	
D	( )	( )	( )	( )	15. ¿A qué clase de tienda iría Ud. para comprar medicinas?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	16. ¿A quién mandaría Ud. venir, si estuviera muy enfermo un amigo suyo?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	17. ¿Cómo contestaría Ud. a una persona que le dijera—Le quedo muy agradecida?	
	( )	( )	( )	( )	18. Estando en un banquete, ¿qué diría Ud. a los demás convidados si Ud. deseara dejar la mesa antes de ellos?	
		+	+	=	S. T.	
	(a)					Add horizontally to get <i>sum total</i> in columns 0, 1, 2, 3; up to the point where the examinee misses three items in succession.
	(b)	×1	×2	×3		Multiply each entry in (a) to get (c);
	(c)	+	+	=		add sum of products horizontally, and then
					÷	divide sum in (c) by S. T. in (a) to get
						QUALITY QUOTIENT.
						Indicate letter (A, B, C, D) corresponding to highest point on scale reached with a rating of 1 or better

SCOPE OF PERFORMANCE

#### Directions for scoring

1. Use the scoring system provided in the test only (1) after having tried it out experimentally on four or more practice cases, and (2) after having compared your ratings with those of trained examiners. (See *Administration, paragraph 2.*)

2. Do not score single word-answers or phrase-answers higher than 1 on the oral-fluency scale.

3. Score answers phrased in dependent clauses on the same basis as complete sentence answers. For example:

*Question: ¿Por qué celebra mucha gente el primero de enero?*

Acceptable answer (to be scored 3 if delivery is fluent and pronunciation practically that of a literate native):

—Porque es el (día de) Año Nuevo.

4. Do not score responses within sight of the examinee. (See *Administration*, paragraph 7 above.)

5. To compute the examinee's oral-proficiency rating, (1) multiply the total number of X's in each column by the number at the head of the column, (2) add the products for each column (3) divide the sum obtained in step 2 by the total number of items answered with a score of 0 or better. This quotient will give an index of the examinee's *quality of performance within the range of the test marked by the highest numbered exercise that he was able to complete with a score of 1 or better*. The scope of performance corresponding to this level is indicated by the letters A, B, C, D in the left-hand margin of the test. For definition of scope, see *Scope of Oral Performance* above.

The scope or range of the examinee's ability to speak the language (*i.e.*, his readiness to speak on a variety of non-technical topics) can be determined by the vocabulary and syntactical frequency, as well as the topical subject matter, of the scaled items, depending upon the construction of the examination. In the case of the sample test of oral fluency in Spanish, the score of 2.0 for a range of 12 items on Part I means that the examinee seems to be able to communicate ordinary life needs (such as those associated with independent travel abroad) in a completely intelligible, but labored fashion. The writer's acquaintance with the examinee used as experimental subject for the tryout lends strength to the conviction that this is precisely the case.

Obviously, to be reliable for careful diagnosis, a test has to be tried out on several hundred cases, preferably on bilingual examinees whose range of ability in the oral use of a foreign language in different life-situations can be verified from outside sources. On the basis of the scores made by such an experimental group of different ability levels a table of norms can readily be drawn up with interpretations of their probable significance in operational terms.

The foregoing discussion is obviously not presented with the thought that the problems presented by oral fluency testing are solved herewith, but rather to indicate possibilities and practical lines of approach to those who are interested in pioneering in a heretofore unexplored, but increasingly important field. The only real handicap to effective progress is the "correlation fallacy" or common delusion that a high total-score on silent group-tests of vocabulary, grammar, or reading can automatically be taken to mean readiness to speak the language fluently in actual life-situations. In fact, not even ability to understand the spoken language provides any guarantee

of a comparable ability to speak it. One need only look at the world about one to find the proof in countless numbers.

Teachers of modern foreign languages are invited to try out Parts I and II of the sample test on a few of their own students, preferably with the collaboration of one or more colleagues to rate the examinees independently. The comparison of the teacher's own ratings with those assigned by her associates to the same examinees, and with her own general knowledge of the students' oral readiness, will illustrate the fascinating possibilities of the field. In some cases, it may also illustrate the shortcomings of formal grammatical methods and silent pen-and-ink exercises in developing anything that foreign natives, in their right minds, would recognize as even partial fluency in speaking their language. Perhaps some reader will want to choose the construction of a valid and reliable oral fluency test, with norms, as a problem for a master's or doctor's thesis. The need is real.

"FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR GLOBAL WAR AND GLOBAL PEACE!"

## *"Foreign Area Studies" in the German College Curriculum*

EMIL L. JORDAN

*New Jersey College for Women, Rutgers University*

(*Author's summary.*—The feasibility of adapting the foreign area studies of the Army Specialized Training Program to the regular college program in languages is investigated.)

ALL educators are agreed that some of the war emergency measures taken by our colleges and universities have proven beneficial and stimulating and should be retained and adapted for peacetime use. In the field of modern languages the Army Specialized Training Program is certainly strengthening the "language for use" trend, and the army's "area training" is inaugurating a most interesting approach that will be very worth while studying as a basic course for undergraduate departments of languages; such a course could effectively link our linguistic work with the problems of the world in which we live, and with America's global relationships; at the same time it would form an excellent foundation for the study of the country's *Geistesgeschichte* on the graduate level.

While these considerations concern all modern languages, I shall restrict this article to the field of German, as a pattern applicable also to French, Spanish, Italian, or whatever other languages may be taught.

For several years courses in German civilization have been offered in a number of colleges and universities, but to my knowledge all of them have been conducted along historical lines, as German *Kulturgeschichte* complimenting and illustrating German *Literaturgeschichte*; they hardly touched upon the unpleasant contemporary world. Also from other, non-linguistic courses the average pre-war student could learn a great deal about German civilization; everywhere in the natural sciences he encountered German research, treatises, names; in the social sciences he became familiar with Germany's wars, revolutions and "isms"; in economics he learned about I. G. Farben and the cartels; in art about Dürer and Holbein; in music about Bach and Beethoven; in philosophy about Kant and Nietzsche. But whether these fragments ever merged into a coherent picture, whether these bits of information were ever placed into any relationship at all, seems doubtful.

In contrast to this "incidental" approach, "Foreign Area Study" emerges as a coordinated and unified program, presenting a foreign society as a well-rounded human organization; it begins with an understanding of the society's language and builds on it a knowledge of its civilization in all its economic, political, cultural and philosophical aspects. This seems to be the realistic approach, the method which would be followed by the stu-



dent of a foreign country living in that country itself. It is focused not on academic disciplines but on the total of human life.

In some of the universities cooperating with the Army Specialized Training Program all foreign area studies are in the hands of social scientists, with many departments and teachers cooperating. In other institutions the major part of the foreign area training is conducted in German by instructors of the German department who have an intimate personal knowledge of German customs, conditions, attitudes, and mentalities. The latter system has proven highly successful in securing uniformity and continuity, and in conveying "the feel of the country." Also for post-war foreign area studies the language departments would probably be best equipped, carrying out this work on the basis of the language itself.

At present experiments in adapting the army's foreign area studies to peacetime use are perhaps most auspiciously conducted in our women's colleges which enjoy capacity enrollments and academically satisfactory student material. Besides, their students are quite conscious of the fact that foreign language studies are closely related to the winning of a global peace.

One field in which much interest has been evinced lately is that of foreign reconstruction and rehabilitation, referring largely to the post-war period. There may be some doubt whether this field should be tackled on the undergraduate level, considering the decision of the government to send no relief and reconstruction workers abroad who are not at least 25 years old. The whole field is still vague and unexplored, and the training directives of the state department deal with the matter most cautiously; yet they suggest that colleges and universities with any plans in this direction should go ahead with them. At this institution it was found that the requirements of the government can be met fairly closely within the existing academic framework, i.e., without setting up a special curriculum or making any spectacular changes. The three approaches which the state department suggests comprise: First the acquisition of a special skill, such as every women's college offers in its majors of economics (accounting), sociology (social work), nutrition, library service, etc. Secondly a speaking knowledge of a foreign language will be required—a stipulation met quite easily by the larger women's colleges, especially those which possess "foreign-language houses." And finally "area training" is suggested for the country in which the language is spoken, carried out along the lines of the ASTP in foreign area studies.

To comply with the third requirement, two courses which have been offered at this college for a number of years, were remodeled under the titles "French Civilization" and "German Civilization." Their historical outline was restricted in favor of a more contemporary approach with the realization that such courses would constitute acceptable and desirable liberal arts offerings even if none of the students ever had an opportunity to do actual reconstruction work in France or Germany. In the case of

German area training the following program resulted from an adaptation of the previous Kulturgeschichte to the suggestions of the army outline:

## GERMAN AREA STUDIES

### I

#### *The Country*

##### 1. *The "Heart of Europe"*

Advantages and disadvantages of Germany's central location. The "persecution complex."—The non-coincidence of linguistic and political boundaries.—The correlation between physical and political geography in the growth of Germany.

##### 2. *The Climate—a Natural Asset*

Climatic comparison of Germany with American regions of the same latitude.—The influence of the Gulf Stream.—The distribution of sea and land climate.—Average temperatures and precipitation.—The relation between climate, health and vitality in Germany and U.S.A.

##### 3. *The Landforms*

The high mountains: The Alpine districts

The ranges ("Mittelgebirge") and plateaus located between the Alps and the northern plains.

The northern German plains.—The rolling hills, the lakes, the swamps and the heaths. The coasts; peculiarities of the North sea coast; the "Wattenmeer"; reclamation projects; the Baltic Sea coast; the "Haffs."

The rivers: the south-north flowing Rhine, Ems, Weser, Elbe, Oder, Vistula, Pregel, Memel.—The west-east flowing Danube.

##### 4. *The National Resources—Natural and Man-Made*

Forest resources: trees for timber and pulp, through scientific forestry.

Agricultural resources: cultivated area; types of soils; methods of cultivation; food crops; fiber crops; specialty crops (sugar beets, vines, tobacco, hops).

Husbandry resources: native breeds of horses; food animals.

Mining resources: coal in Ruhr and Upper Silesia; lignite in Central and Western Germany; phosphate, salt, metals, clays.

Industrial resources: electric power industry; heavy industry; chemical industry; food industry; textile industry; pulp industry; other industries.

##### 5. *Communications—The Arteries of National Life*

The road system: country roads, Kreisstrassen, Autobahnen.

The German and Austrian railroad systems.

The river-canal networks; the northeastern network, the Mittelland canal; the Rhine-Main-Danube canal.

The centralization of telephone, telegraph, radio.

##### 6. *The Cities—Centers of Civilization*

The capital: Berlin.

The ports: Bremen, Hamburg, Kiel, Lübeck, Stettin, Danzig, Königsberg.

Central German cities: Magdeburg, Weimar, Leipzig, Chemnitz, Dresden, Breslau.

Western German cities: Hannover, Köln, Essen, Dortmund, Duisburg, Düsseldorf, Gelsenkirchen, Bochum, Wuppertal.

Southern German cities: Frankfurt/M., Mannheim, Stuttgart, Nürnberg, Augsburg, München.

The Austrian capital: Vienna.

##### 7. *The National Institutions.*

Local, county, provincial, state, and central government.

The educational system: primary and secondary schools, universities, research institutes.

—The rift between "gebildet" and "ungebildet."—Education for democracy.

## II

*The People*

8. *Ethnic Origins of the German People*  
Racial origins: prehistoric roots and the gradual rise of the German people.—Celtic-Latin-Slavic admixtures.  
The anthropological characteristics and physical appearance.
9. *Linguistic Origins of the German Language*  
From "Urgemanisch" to modern German as created by Luther's bible translation.  
Identification of dialects; non-Germanic linguistic remnants.
10. *Historical Growth—The Principal Periods of German History*  
The tribal period; Tacitus; the Völkerwanderung (500).  
The era of the church; the hierarchy as the dominating power (800).  
The era of the knight; the crusades; scholasticism; Gothic art (1100).  
The era of the citizen; the rise of the cities, of commerce and culture (1500).  
The era of the prince; the courts as centers of civilization; the collapse of German national life (1650).  
The era of the poet and the thinker; the period of classicism as climax of Germany's cultural achievement (1800).  
The era of unification; the founding and consolidation of the Reich (1870).  
The era of science and industry; the rise of a different Germany; world contacts and ambitions (1910).—The First World War.  
The attempt at democracy; the Weimar republic; inflation and depression (1918–32).  
The era of Nazism; the rise of Hitler; the Second World War (1943).
11. *Men That Shaped the Fate of the German People*  
Statesmen and Politicians: Charlemagne, Frederick Barbarossa, Frederick the Great, Bismarck, Hitler.  
Thinkers and Philosophers: Luther; Leibniz; Kant; Hegel; Schopenhauer; Nietzsche; Spengler.
12. *The German Heritage in the Arts*  
In Literature: The Minnesänger; the Meistersinger; Lessing, Goethe, Schiller; the Romanticists; the Realists; the Moderns.  
In Painting: Dürer, Holbein, Grünewald; the later schools.  
In Music: Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Schumann, Wagner, Brahms, Johann Strauss, Richard Strauss.
13. *The German People Today*  
Political and social conditions; intrusion into private lives; loss of personal freedom; mass shifts of populations.  
Economic conditions; domination of economic life by state and cartels.  
Cultural conditions; complete sterility except in the art of propaganda.  
Proposals for the rehabilitation of the German people.

The course is conducted almost entirely in German.

At a glance it may appear that too much ground is covered in the outline; on the other hand, with three classes a week for two semesters about 90 lecture periods are at the instructor's disposal, and much material can be presented and discussed in such an amount of time.

At this institution the course was inaugurated this fall and is proving stimulating and enjoyable both to the instructor and—it is hoped—to the students. Its experimental nature is fully recognized by all concerned.

# *An Air Vocabulary of 100 Words in Spanish and Portuguese*

RENATO ROSALDO

*University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois. (Former Instructor of Spanish  
at Chanute Field, Rantoul, Illinois)*

The following list is intended to supplement a previous compilation of Theodore Huebener which appeared under the title of "An Air Vocabulary of 100 Words" in *The Modern Language Journal*, vol. XXVII, pp. 353-355, and was made for the French and German languages. We believe that the list so carefully selected by Director Huebener would be equally useful for Spanish and Portuguese.

## AVIATION

ENGLISH	SPANISH	PORTUGUESE
aviation	aviación (f)	aviação (f)
aeronautics	aeronáutica (f)	aeronáutica (f)
aircraft	aeronave (f)	aeronave (f)
flight	vuelo (m)	vôo (m)
ceiling	techo (m)	teto (m)
altitude	altura (f)	altura (f)
speed	velocidad (f)	velocidade (f)

## THE AVIATOR

aviator	aviador (m)	aviador (m)
pilot	piloto (m)	pilôto (m)
crew	tripulación (f)	tripulação (f)
parachutist	paracaidista (m)	páraquedista (m)
"ace"	"as" (m)	"ás" (m)

## THE AIRPLANE

airplane	aeroplano (m)	aeroplano (m)
wing	ala (f)	ala (f), aza (f)
rudder	timón (m) (de dirección)	leme (m)
under carriage	tren (m) de aterrizaje	trem (m) de aterragem
body, fuselage	fuselaje (m)	fuselagem (f)
propeller	hélice (f)	hélice (f)
tank	tanque (m), depósito (m)	tanque (m), depósito (m)
fuel	combustible (m)	combustível (m)
oil	aceite (m)	óleo (m)
cockpit	cabina (f), puesto (m) del piloto	cabina (f), lugar (m) do pilôto
dash board	tablero (m)	tablier (m), painel (m)
compass	brújula (f)	bússola (f)

ENGLISH	SPANISH	PORTUGUESE
altimeter	altímetro (m)	altímetro (m)
oil pressure gauge	manómetro (m) de aceite	manómetro (m) de óleo
throttle	acelerador (m)	acelerador (m), válvula (f) reguladora
controls	controles (m)	controles (m)
cabin	cabina (f)	cabina (f), cabine (f)
parachute	paracaídas (m)	pára-quedas (m)

## THE ENGINE

engine	motor (m)	motor (m)
horse-power	caballo(s) (m) de fuerza	cavalo-vapor (m)
cylinder	cilindro (m)	cilindro (m)
crankcase	cárter (m)	cárter (m)
crankshaft	cigüeñal (m)	virabrequim (m)
piston	pistón (m)	pistão (m), piston (m)
exhaust	escape (m)	escape (m), cano (m) de descarga
valve	válvula (f)	válvula (f)
carburetor	carburador (m)	carburador (m)
ignition	ignición (f), encendido (m)	ignição (f)
sparkplug	bujía (f)	vela (f) de ignição
lubrication	lubricación (f)	lubrificação (f)
radiator	radiador (m)	radiador (m)
cowling	cubierta (f), capot (m)	capota (f)

## TYPES OF PLANES

monoplane	monoplano (m)	monoplano (m)
biplane	biplano (m)	biplano (m)
triplane	triplano (m)	triplano (m)
seaplane	hidroavión (m), hidro- plano (m)	hidroavião (m), hidro- plano (m)
autogiro	autogiro (m)	autogiro (m)
helicopter	helicóptero (m)	helicóptero (m)
glider	planeador (m)	planador (m)

## THE AIRPORT

airport	aeropuerto (m)	aeroporto (m)
airdrome	aeródromo (m)	aeródromo (m)
air traffic	tráfico (m) aéreo	tráfego (m) aéreo
hangar	hangar (m)	hangar (m)
runway	pista (f)	pista (f)



ENGLISH	SPANISH	PORTUGUESE
mechanic	mecánico (m)	mecânico (m)
to fuel	cargar gasolina, abastecerse de combustible	abastecer, suprir, carregar gasolina

## FLYING

to fly	volar	voar
to taxi	correr por tierra	correr no terreno
to take off	despegar, decolar	decolar
take-off	despegue (m), decolaje (m)	decolagem (f)
to climb	subir	subir
to circle	rodear	rodear
to glide	planear	deslizar
to spin	entrar en una barrena	cair de caracol
loop	rizo (m), "loop" (m)	viravolta (f)
nose dive	descenso (m) de cabeza, descenso (m) de picada	descida (f) picada
to crash	chocar, desplomarse	chocar
landing	atterrizaje (m)	aterriçagem (f), aterragem (f)
forced landing	atterrizaje (m) forzoso	aterriçagem (f) forçada
soaring	planeo (m)	planeo (m), voo com o motor parado sem perder altura
to take sights or a bearing	orientarse	orientar-se, determinar um rumo

## AERIAL WARFARE

air force	fuerza (f) aérea	fôrça (f) aérea
squadron	escuadrón (m), flotilla (f)	esquadrão (m)
flight	escuadrilla (f) patrulla (f)	esquadrilha (f)
pursuit flight	escuadrilla (f) de caza	esquadrilha (f) de caça
bomber	avión (m) de bombardeo	avião (m) de bombardeio
machine gun	ametralladora (f)	metralhadora (f)
to bomb	bombardear	bombardear

## AIR DEFENSE

air defense	defensa (f) aérea	defesa (f) aérea
camouflage	camuflaje (m)	camuflagem (f)
anti-aircraft gun	cañón (m) antiaéreo	canhão (m) anti-aéreo
anti-aircraft battery	batería (f) antiaérea	bateria (f) anti-aérea

ENGLISH	SPANISH	PORTUGUESE
air raid	raíd (m) aéreo, incursión (f) aérea	raid (m) aéreo, incursão (f) aérea
bomb-proof shelter	a prueba de bomba abrigo (m), refugio (m)	à prova de bomba abrigo (m), refúgio (m)
air raid drill	práctica (f) de defensa aérea	exercício (m) de defesa aérea
to black out	obscurecer	escurecer
black out	obscurecimiento (m)	escurecimento (m)
siren	sirena (f)	sirena (f), sirene (f)
alarm	alarma (f), alerta (f)	alarme (m)
to explode	explotar	explodir, rebentar
explosion	explosión (f)	explosão (f)
explosive bomb	bomba (f) explosiva	bomba (f) explosiva
incendiary bomb	bomba (f) incendiaria	bomba (f) incendiária
gas bomb	bomba (f) de gas	bomba (f) de gás
poison gas	gas (m) tóxico	gás (m) tóxico
gas mask	máscara (f) contra gases, máscara (f) antigás	máscara (f) contra gases

"FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR THE 'AIR AGE'!"

## *New Problems in the Teaching of Russian*

AGNES JACQUES

*Illinois Institute of Technology, Chicago, Illinois*

(*Author's summary.*—"New Problems in the Teaching of Russian." Because of the increasing interest in the study of Russian, we must take inventory of our teaching materials and techniques. The materials are few and inadequate. Since Russian is a highly inflected language and very difficult, material based on scientific word and syntax counts would be very useful. The author reports success with such an attempt.)

UNTIL recently only a few students in our universities have studied Russian. There have been many reasons for this. First, and perhaps foremost, has been the fear of the language because of its known or rumored difficulty. The fear of the strange characters of the Russian alphabet has frightened many a student away. The ranks of those who have made the first hurdle of the alphabet have been thinned gradually by the many declensions, the verb aspects, declensions of numerals, and the difficulties of retaining the Russian vocabulary. But more important than all this has been the strange and prevalent idea that the language of 180,000,000 people—the language of Tolstoy, of Pushkin, of Tchaikovsky, of Pavlov, of Lenin was just a dialect spoken by a few uncouth people with beards and not worth the great struggle involved. Greek was difficult too—but then it was a *dead* language and therefore very respectable.

However, the past few years have made changes. For one thing, many advanced students of the natural and social sciences in our universities have discovered that new and important contributions were being made to their field by the Russians. And these contributions were *written in Russian*. If one wished to know what the Russians said, one had to learn their language and read the original articles. To this, of course, in the past two years has been added the realization that in Russia we have an important ally—if we like them or we don't, we realize that they are important to us. Perhaps we can have no better proof of this than the fact that Hollywood has taken up the Russians!

Whereas, a few years ago, only a handful of universities offered any courses whatever in Russian, and whereas only two or three offered higher degrees in the subject, now almost every important university in the country is offering at least beginning Russian. Several universities, with the assistance of the Council of Learned Societies, are offering intensive courses in which the student spends all of his time studying Russian. Many students who have completed these courses are now serving their government either in military or civilian capacities because of their knowledge of Russian.

As a result, we teachers of Russian are faced with new problems. Formerly there were two groups, roughly, who studied Russian: 1. The en-

thusiastic "party-members" or "fellow-travellers" eager to learn the language of the little fathers in Moscow. Most of these people attended large classes in workers' or radical schools. They rarely came to universities to study. 2. Small groups of earnest, linguistically minded people who wanted to gain familiarity with another branch of the Indo-European languages. They were good students, hard to discourage. They were prepared to put up with anything!

To these groups more recently have been added; 1. The graduate students mentioned above; 2. Many potential or actual members of the armed forces; 3. The general public, wishing to learn Russian for cultural reasons, or merely out of curiosity.

These groups of students present a new challenge to us. On the whole, they are quite unversed in other foreign languages or the science of linguistics. Coming from American schools, they are often innocent of the most fundamental principles of grammar. I have had many a fine Ph.D. in my classes to whom the concept of the "dative case" has been a deep mystery.

Our task is to teach Russian to this worthy but inexperienced student body. We must present it to them in a comprehensible, agreeable, and *useful* form.

But we are faced with many handicaps, In the first place, because of the small number of students previously involved, and also because of the expense and difficulties in publishing Russian textbooks, we have a very meager choice for our classes. The grammar which I and many of my colleagues use because we believe it is the best one available was originally written for English businessmen going to Russia to sell various wares. A far cry from the needs of our students today! Most of the published readers available are just as bad. For some reason it has always been thought proper to present beginners with the archaic language of the Russian peasant or the folk-tale. This language was considered simple because it was spoken by simple people. No one who has taught languages believes that the highly idiomatic talk of peasants and children is easy for beginners. Moreover, the subject matter is uninteresting. After battling with a highly complicated text full of new words and colloquial expressions, the student finds that what he has deciphered has hardly been worth his while. He soon becomes discouraged by the story of the clever peasant and the czar, or the story about good little Masha.

In the past months several teachers of Russian, evidently feeling these deficiencies, have prepared mimeographed collections of good modern material. As far as I know none of these have been published as yet. Some of them are accented and have vocabularies attached. Others do not. However, they are *still* too difficult for the average beginner. Though the subject matter is interesting, little consideration has been given to the fact that even the simplest Russian presents many problems for the beginner.

What needs to be done with these texts is a conscious simplification of

the language in which they are written. At the risk of being accused of "murdering" a beautiful, idiomatic language, we must make deliberate efforts to cut down the number of words per page, to repeat words wherever possible and to use cognates at the slightest opportunity.

Most of the readers of this *Journal* are familiar with the work done along these lines in Spanish, German, and French. The generous support of the Modern Foreign Language Study has promoted numerous investigations of the problems involved in teaching foreign languages. Frequency counts have been made of vocabulary and grammatical problems. Odgen's "Basic English" texts have served as models for some of these texts. On the basis of already prepared frequency counts, authors have written elementary reading texts. Not only have they limited their vocabularies to words in the frequency lists, but they have consciously repeated them. Moreover they have made deliberate use of cognates.

Such work has scarcely begun in Russian. It is true that there is a pamphlet entitled *One Thousand Commonly Used Russian Words*,<sup>1</sup> compiled by George Z. Patrick, but there is no indication in the book as to how this list was compiled. As far as I know, no beginning text has been written on the basis of even these 1000 words.

If such texts have proved useful in comparatively simple languages, such as German, French and Spanish, how much more necessary they are in a complex language, such as Russian. Equipped with simple, modern texts, we could overcome countless difficulties for our students. Nothing gives the beginner such satisfaction as to pick up a page of a book in the language he is studying and to decipher it without difficulty. It is also gratifying to him to find when he has deciphered the page, that he is reading something which interests him.

With a little effort we can do much useful work in Russian along these lines. I personally have been much gratified by the results obtained in my class at University College (the extension division of the University of Chicago) during the past spring.<sup>2</sup> I took materials from contemporary Russian texts and newspapers and deliberately wrote them down, using cognates as much as possible. Thus, as soon as they had become familiar with the Russian alphabet, my students were presented with sentences such as the following: "V Moskve teatri, shkoli, fabriki, kino, tramvai i metro." With only a preposition and a conjunction that were not cognates, they had no difficulty in making out such sentences.

In general, I have found that vocabulary offers a greater stumbling block

<sup>1</sup> *One Thousand Commonly Used Russian Words*, with illustrative sentences, compiled by George Z. Patrick, Berkeley, California; for the American Council, Institute of Pacific Relations, 129 E. 52nd St., New York City, 1935. 107 pp.

<sup>2</sup> This material is now available in mimeographed form at the University of Chicago (*A Russian Primer—Graded Readings from Contemporary Russian Writers*. 66 mimeographed pages including notes and vocabulary).



to students than complex grammatical forms. Their discouragement at meeting an instrumental plural, is slight in contrast to that felt at meeting strings of unfamiliar words or peasant dialect. The need for thumbing endlessly through pages of vocabulary at the end of an elementary reader has discouraged the efforts of many sincere student. Therefore, not only have I consciously attempted to limit my vocabulary, I have also presented the vocabulary as conveniently as possible, so that it will be right at the hand of the student. I have done this by appending a vocabulary at the end of each reading selection, rather than all together at the end of the book. This device is not new—it has been used in some of the older Pitman Russian texts and also by some Spanish and French ones.

In brief, though my attempt has been rather hasty and though I have had little but my ten years of teaching experience to go by, I have had gratifying results from my use of a prepared text. I have attempted: 1. To limit my vocabulary to 1000 words; 2. To introduce words gradually, arbitrarily setting a limit of about twenty new words per page; 3. To repeat words at least five times in closely contiguous locations; 4. To use cognates wherever possible; 5. To present the new words at the end of each selection, treating as new words all those appearing less than five times previously. Although I have done everything I could to simplify the texts, I have firmly tried to keep the subject matter on an adult level. I have excluded the tales of little Masha and the wise peasant, not because they are not charming, but because they are difficult and not of contemporary interest. I know that my students today have positive and utilitarian aims.

Unfortunately my work has had to be subjective as I have had nothing objective to base it upon. There is great need for an actual vocabulary frequency count. Also, a frequency count of grammatical items would be of great service. Such a count would help us to eliminate the less important items from our elementary grammars and would enable us to prepare a truly useful grammar. Very often we have to teach our students subjects with which they may never come in contact again. So far, what we do is merely guess work.

If we can prepare texts on a scientific basis and have them well and attractively published, as attractively as the French, German and Spanish books which have flooded the markets for years, I feel certain that the study of Russian will soon attain the position it deserves in our universities and perhaps even in our secondary schools. And why not? Why not teach the language of an important ally, the language of great musicians, poets, scientists, and novelists? Why not teach the native tongue of 180,000,000 human beings? Our students are eager. It is up to us to give them what they so anxiously seek.

## *I Learn French*

THOMAS EDWARD SAYLES

*Teaneck High School, Teaneck, New Jersey*

SOME summers ago, in those days when Hitler was hardly more than a funny little man with a mustache, I went to Paris. Although I had been there before, it was not until that trip that I decided to carry out a long-postponed resolution: I swore that I would have more than a nodding acquaintance with the French language.

I had, at last, grown tired of ordering omelets, of missing the jokes at a revue, and at using Indian signs when I inquired directions. "If I ever get out of this," I vowed one day, "I'm going to learn French." Unlike most resolutions, that one I did keep, and how I kept it might be of some interest.

First of all, lest I seem to assume too much credit for my feat, I should admit that I had been exposed to high school French for two years—with rather vague results. Also, I had been to Paris on several other summer excursions. I know, moreover, the difference between a noun and a verb. In spite of this handicap, my beginning was painfully slow, and although I grasped every opportunity to sap accents and information from my French-speaking friends, it was by my own efforts that I advanced as far as I have.

At the school where I teach, I have a free period during the day. Generally, during that period I would read in the library. I averaged at least an hour's work every day. The important thing is that I read regularly. I cannot emphasize that fact too strongly. Moreover, I read material that was interesting to me. I studied almost no rules, I memorized no vocabulary every night, and I conjugated no irregular verbs. Plowing grimly ahead and thumbing my dictionary only when absolutely necessary, I finished story after story, and after a while I began to get the "feel" of the language.

A good beginning is always important, and I was lucky in selecting for my first book that charmingly French tale, *The Memoirs of an Ass*. As I look back on that experience, I rank it tops among my literary adventures.

The pleasure I secured was a rich one. I had the satisfaction of finding something for myself. (As a matter of fact, I had just grabbed the book from the shelf and liked the pictures.) Also, I was taking part in a new type of experience.

All the world loves a story. Sometimes, even if the story isn't very good, the world is quite willing to wait for it to improve. How many whippoorwill movies have lured us on in this vain hope! The point is, the story's the thing. Given material of the right type, I swear that anyone loves to read. The only problem is to find the right book to put in the hands of the right person.

It might be interesting to list some of the "right" books I read during the year. Zamocois' *Un Arriviste*, Henri Duvernois' *La Dame de Bronze* and

*Le M. de Cristal*, Georges Courteline's *La Paix chez Soi*, Jules Renard's *Poil de Carotte*, Max Maurey's *Rosalie*, Eugène Labiche and Edouard Martin's *La Poudre aux Yeux*, Brueys' *L'Avocat Patelin*, Prosper Mérimée's *Columbe*, Eugene Labiche's *Le Voyage de M. Perrichon*, André Maurois' *En Amérique*, Sacha Guitry's *Les Mémoires d'un Tricheur*, Honoré de Balzac's *Le Curé de Tours*, *Quelque Chose de Nouveau*, Alphonse Daudet's *Le Petit Chose*, Corneille's *Le Cid*, Racine's *Andromaque*, Molière's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, Victor Hugo's *Ruy Blas* and *Hernani*.

In addition to these, I would occasionally purchase a French newspaper. I devoured every copy of *La Petite Illustration* that I could find.

Several books, among which was *Mon Oncle et Mon Curé*, I dropped at once. I found the vocabulary too difficult. I did not want to discourage myself for one minute.

A logical question at this point might be, "What about grammar?" Or should I say, GRAMMAR!? The answer is that I did almost nothing. Most of the books I used were texts, so there was certain to be a supply of technical material cluttering the pages. But I didn't let *that* take too much of my time. Most of the explanations meant very little to me, even though I teach grammar myself. I felt lonesome for M. Cassell only when a chunk of the story was incomprehensible because of a term or idiom. If I met with enough trouble, then I began "looking up." Nouns and irregular verbs didn't bother me too much. I was after stories, but if I picked up any grammar en route, so much the better.

I know that a somebody is going to tell me that I can never speak correctly nor read perfectly unless I know the technicalities of a language, especially French. But I know that I'm not really interested in doing *everything* perfectly. I am out for a bit of fun, too. I feel that my poor grammar and my ignorance of constructions will straighten themselves out later. Right now, I am most interested in reading for enjoyment. Don't forget that it was a Frenchman, Rousseau, who said that *no* learning took place unless pleasure were present.

My adventure has taught me several facts, important to me as a pupil of French and as a teacher of English. I knew all of these findings before, but having rediscovered them for myself made me feel a little like Columbus. As a summary then:

1. Rapid progress in a language most certainly is accomplished by habitual, extensive reading. The subject matter, however, must appeal to the reader.
2. Technicalities, such as the learning of rules and the conjugating of rules, have but little significance to the beginner.
3. Satisfaction and not discouragement must be the reader's reward. More accomplishment is felt by completing several simple plays or stories than by finishing a difficult classic.

4. The physical features of the book are most important. The text book should be richly illustrated and colorfully bound. It must be clearly printed and easy to handle. No one wants a text lacking these features. No one wants a text cluttered with obscure notes like, "See page 312, line 43, note 65." If there must be notes, let them be marginal or foot.

5. Teachers and publishers alike must realize the reading tastes of varied groups. Many of the classics, for example, sound better in the Odeon than in the classroom of the Hometown High School. Pupils' appetite for humor, science, adventure, romance—whatever it might be—can be satisfied.

Arrayed against the language teacher this day are many forces. The movies, the comics, the radio are our competitors. We teachers are enthusiastic in attempting to instill an appreciation for the finest literature, but many of us are expecting too much. However, with more simple methods and better materials, we may still outsmart Mickey Mouse, Dick Tracy, and Superman.

"AMERICANS, AWAKE TO LANGUAGE NEEDS!"

## *Pontigny en Amérique*

RUTH J. DEAN

*Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, Massachusetts*

(*Author's summary.*—The annual "entretiens de Pontigny," renewed at Mount Holyoke College, strengthen international understanding and contribute to maintaining free and constructive intellectual discussion in a world at war.)

THE SPIRIT of Pontigny has been renewed in America. It was no ordinary summer session that was organized in 1942 for the recently founded École Libre des Hautes Études by the Dean of its Faculty of Letters, Gustave Cohen, Professeur en Sorbonne. At the suggestion of Professor Helen Patch, chairman of the French Department at Mount Holyoke College, and upon the invitation of the College, a four-week session was held in Porter Hall on the South Hadley campus, beginning in the middle of August when the summer schools were drawing to a close. The program was modeled on the *Décades* established by Paul Desjardins at the Cistercian abbey of Pontigny. It will be recalled that at those ten-day sessions—a series of which was held every summer except in wartime from 1910 on—Desjardins had assembled scholars, artists, philosophers, men and women of letters and of science from many countries to discuss pertinent questions of intellectual interest.

To "Pontigny en Amérique" came the same kind of group, and for four weeks one of the college halls became an international center for a stimulating and amicable exchange of ideas. A happy circumstance, which assured the procedure as well as the spirit of Pontigny, was the presence of several men and women who had themselves attended the *Décades* in France.

Each session was of a week's duration and comprised a morning and an afternoon series of two-hour *entretiens*: one series for art, literature, and philosophy, the other for political and social problems. With such unifying subjects as "L'Art et l'Homme," the two series could not be strictly separated, and a joint session was held on Saturday mornings to integrate the week's discussions. Among the topics treated were Liberty and Authority, Democracy and Planned Economy, Aspects of Modern Philosophical Thought, the Responsibility of Literature in the Present Crisis. Nor was the historical basis of modern civilization lost sight of. The arts group, for instance, when considering the role of the theatre, heard reports on the work of the *Théophiliciens* organized by Professor Cohen, and on recent productions of medieval plays in this country; the political group heard a paper, by M. Pierre Guédenet of the Mount Holyoke College French Department, on projects for international peace; while Plato was frequently invoked when discussions turned to philosophy. From twenty-five to sixty persons



attended each meeting and about two hundred in all, representing some fifteen nationalities, were enrolled during the month by M. and Mme. Guédenet, who were host and hostess at Porter Hall.

In the 1943 sessions the general topic was *Permanence des Valeurs et Renouveau des Méthodes*. The morning *entretiens*, for a week each, were devoted to art, poetry, novel, drama; the afternoons similarly to philosophy, politics, man and society, science. The attendance was as large and the group as international as before. More Americans participated in the program this year, among whom were Marianne Moore, James Rorty and Wallace Stevens for the poetry discussions and Lee Simonson for the *entretiens* on the theatre. Since Asst. Prof. and Mme. Guédenet were needed at Kenyon College to organize and teach in one of the Army's Area schools, their places were taken by Mlle. Jacqueline Hadamard (teacher at the Lycée français in New York City and daughter of the scientist, Jacques Hadamard, who is Vice-President of the École Libre) and Mlle. Marie-Jeanne Bourgoin (assistant professor of French at Mount Holyoke College).

As balance to the strenuous intellectual activity there was an easy informality in the setting. On fine days the groups met on the lawn where individuals found sun or shade as they preferred. Damp or cool days sent the *entretiens* indoors to the comfort of the smoking-room. Discussions continued in the dining-hall and friendly contacts were further developed over frequent cups of coffee in the village drugstore, which soon became accustomed to finding itself transformed into a French café two or three times a day. The college lake and tennis courts were available, and it need hardly be added that the guests took full advantage of walks in the New England countryside. The European visitors were interested in the Colonial setting of Mount Holyoke College and of its neighbor Amherst College, and in the pioneering activity of Mary Lyon in founding a college for women over a century ago. By means of informal lectures, conversations, and visits to several campuses, they learned something of the history, traditions, and present trends of American college education. They were not a little surprised to find some of the South Hadley citizens speaking fluent French and they became acquainted with the French-speaking community of Holyoke. Evenings were occupied by informal meetings, a series of concerts by distinguished visiting musicians, and lectures by international authorities on a variety of subjects. The Pontigny group included so many artists active with brush, pencil and camera that exhibitions of their current work were arranged in the college library.

Mount Holyoke College counts itself fortunate to have a share, as part of its wartime activity, in making possible this annual gathering of eminent thinkers. The enterprise helps to preserve objective intellectual discussion in a world at war, and should become an important force in international understanding and post-war reconstruction.

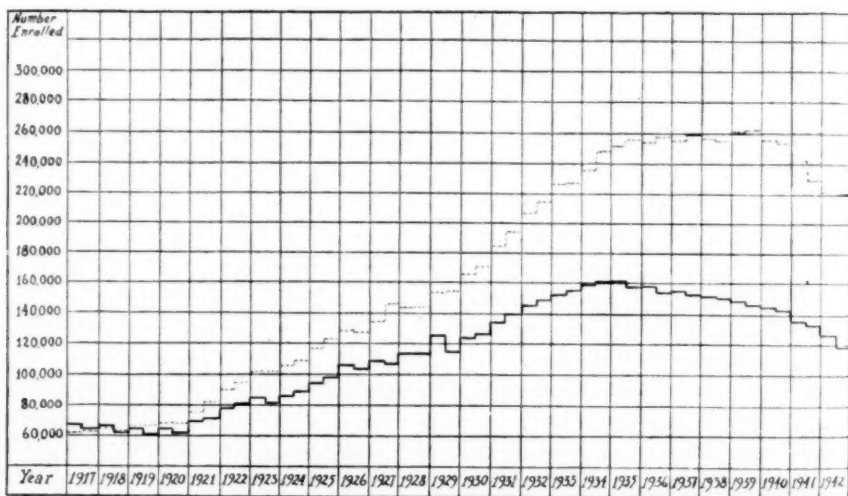
# Foreign-Language Enrollment in the New York City High Schools, 1917-1942

THEODORE HUEBENER

*Acting Director of Foreign Languages, Board of Education, New York City*

(Author's summary.—Fluctuations in the foreign language enrollment of New York City during the last 20 years have been due to the two wars, to curricular changes, to the decline in school population, and to competition with other subjects. Such fluctuations are only a partial reflection of popularity of the subject and of student choice.)

**I**N 1917 practically all the students in the New York City High Schools were enrolled in foreign-language classes. In fact, a good many of them studied more than one language and thus it came about that a total high school population of 62,237, the enrollment in foreign languages was 69,486. It will be seen from the accompanying graph that German with an enroll-



HIGH SCHOOL POPULATION AND FOREIGN-LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT, 1917-1942

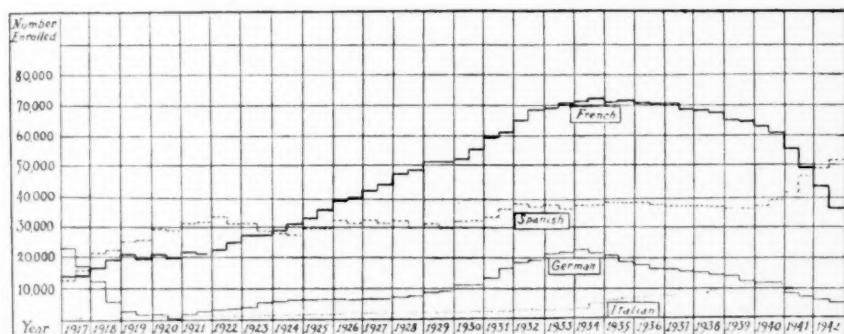
ment of 23,898 was the leading language. Latin took second place with 17,409, and French third place with 14,714. The Spanish enrollment was 13,362.

From 1917 on there was a rapid decline in German until it reached a low point of 60 in October 1920. From that time on it increased steadily until it reached a new high of 22,550 in March 1934. In that year a decline again set in, the enrollment ultimate falling below 6,000.

French began in 1917 with 14,714 and rose rather steadily until it reached its high point, in October 1934, of 72,779. From then on it has been declining, dropping precipitously within the last two years.

Italian had fewer than 100 students enrolled between October 1917 and October 1919. Then a gradual rise set in which continued until March 1940, when it reached a peak of 10,542. Since then, it, too, has been declining; it is now slightly ahead of German.

The Spanish enrollment which totaled 13,362 in March 1917 increased during the first five years until it reached practically a plateau of 30,000 which it maintained until 1931; then it rose to a second plateau of 37,000 which it maintained until 1941. Within the last few years there has been a



MODERN-LANGUAGE ENROLLMENT IN HIGH SCHOOLS OF NEW YORK CITY, 1917-1942

decided spurt and it is now the leading language, enrolling 51,911. This is more than the other three modern languages combined. It is evident, however, from the graph that it has not reached the high point attained by French in the years from 1929 to 1940.

The fluctuations shown in the graph are not due entirely to pupil choice or popularity of the language. In fact, a number of other fundamental factors have caused shifting in language programs. The decrease in the number of students, in proportion to the total high school enrollment, is due largely to the increase in the variety of elective courses, a marked increase in the number of commercial students, and the increased amount of time that has been given to the social studies.

As for Latin, it has shown the greatest steadiness in enrollment of all the languages. From 1917 to 1921 it hovered around 17,000. In 1922 it rose to 20,000. From 1926 to 1931 it had an average of 27,000. From 1932 to 1939 it kept close to 22,000. However, it, too, has suffered somewhat from the recent decline and is now down to 16,000.

With the introduction of compulsory war courses in the last two years

of the senior high school, a further contraction in foreign-language enrollments cannot be averted. There is still hope that foreign-language work of an extremely practical nature may be accepted as a war course.

New York City has probably the most ambitious secondary school foreign-language program in the country. It offers instruction in seven languages: French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Italian, Latin and Spanish. In addition to the 102,000 foreign-language students in senior high schools, there are 37,000 students taking foreign languages in junior high schools.

"FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR GLOBAL WAR AND GLOBAL PEACE!"

## *Introduce Them First*

ELLA H. THOMPSON

*Metuchen High School, Metuchen, New Jersey*

(Author's summary.—This is a summary of a syllabus for a course in "General Language" written as a thesis at Cornell University. It is based on both experience and research.)

**D**URING this important period for modern language study in the schools, when emphasis is placed on practicality and haste, it is fitting that interest in a course combining language study and a cultural background of English should increase. Before beginning the study of a foreign language, pupils need to be introduced to ideas of language. Even if they study only English, they will better appreciate it from a survey of its linguistic aspects. Courses in "general language" have proved their worth in many schools throughout the past decade. However, they have not yet gained the popularity of the "general science" course in the Junior High School.

In educating the individual as a social being, teachers cannot overlook the importance of the fundamental values of language. As Joseph Vendryes states in his *Language: a Linguistic Introduction to History*, "Language does not exist apart from the people who think and speak it . . . . The evolution of language thus constitutes only one aspect of the evolution of society." Educators have generally recognized the value of general courses as a background for English, foreign languages, science, mathematics, and other high school subjects. Language is by no means the least important, since it provides a basis for other studies. With the modern emphasis on integration, such a course of language study is highly appropriate.

Large city systems have pioneered in the introduction of general language programs in their schools. Syllabuses of Denver, Detroit, New York City, and Philadelphia are notable comprehensive studies in the field. Although there are several recently published textbooks in general language, these too are designed for large city schools.

Because of the mixture of nationalities in the metropolitan areas, the need for understanding of a common language background and for the appreciation of the English language is greater than the need in other regions of the United States. These other areas, on the other hand, need much the same education for tolerance and the same knowledge of the position English holds in historical and modern times, since they are continually meeting problems caused by language differences.

In planning the organization of a general language course for the school, the administrative problem must be the first consideration. As the proportion of pupils leaving school at the end of the eighth or ninth grades is high, the time for a general language program of benefit to most pupils is

during one of those two years. Another reason for placing it at this point in the Junior High School is the need for a foundation for those continuing in Senior High School. Also, pupils in the eighth and ninth grades have a better grasp of such material than do pupils in lower grades.

While pupils are completing the last year of the elementary school, or the last year of the Junior High School, their schedule of required work is necessarily large. Subjects normally studied include English, history, science, and arithmetic, supplemented by physical training, music, and art. It is readily seen that there is little time for general language.

Many principals, however, consider a background course in the study of language and its history of sufficient importance to include it in the eighth or ninth grade program. If the school officials desire pupils to have a foretaste of language study and a survey of its value, they arrange for at least two periods a week to be devoted to a general language course. One period a week has proved unsatisfactory.

Reasons commonly indicated for introducing a general course in language are: (1) to provide a better knowledge of English; (2) to serve as a test of the pupil's abilities in the language field; (3) to give an over-view of language study, in other words to explore the field; (4) to assist in caring for the interests of language-misfits. (Paraphrase of reasons given in *Modern Foreign Languages and their Teaching*, by Cole and Tharp, page 359.)

Everyone uses language, whether he lives in city or country. The pupils in the smaller schools lack the wide experience of city-dwellers, who find foreign-speaking people nearby, but both should profit from the varied content of a general course. Pupils continuing in high school may have slight ability or interest in academic studies. These children follow agricultural or homemaking courses, while their more intelligent and ambitious companions pursue the academic program. If the cultural study of language and the guidance in choosing foreign language courses in the high school are not offered in the eighth or ninth grade, many pupils never learn the importance of language in their daily lives.

The ordinary English course does not stress the study of English as a language, nor does it emphasize the rich and varied ancestry of English. Usually the pupil has little or no realization of what the study of language means. He has probably heard people refer to Latin as a "dead" language required for college entrance or for certain professions, and he knows that French, or German, or Spanish, is a language spoken today. If he chooses one of these foreign languages as part of his curriculum in high school, the choice comes more from curiosity than from interest or thought of practical value. Many who enter ancient or modern foreign language classes are unfit for language study or are under a misapprehension of its meaning. After the novelty wears off, they soon lose interest, because they had expected a different treatment of the subject.



The language teacher in the small school will perhaps have only vague ideas of aims and procedures in the teaching of general language. Textbooks would be impractical, as they are expensive and not easily adaptable to schools smaller than those in the large cities. Reference books are usually few. The teacher is faced with a serious problem.

In setting up aims for a general language course, the teacher must first determine any special needs and interests of the pupils he is going to teach. "Know the pupil" should be the primary maxim, and should lead to a discovery of such important facts as foreign parentage, vocational interest, occupation of parents, culture in the home, religious groups, record in school subjects, and experience in travel. A questionnaire to be filled in by the pupils might prove helpful, as well as an investigation in school files of data on intelligence quotient, age, courses, etc. To be handy for quick reference and comparison, this information should be transferred immediately to small cards and filed for further use. The material of the course must then be adapted to meet the needs and interests found, in addition to the general needs of the average eighth or ninth grade pupil.

Although its primary importance is as a proving ground, the course in general language should contribute to the pupil's appreciation of the world about him and especially of the English language. Improvement in the use of English grammar and vocabulary should be discernible during the course. By tracing the history of speech and writing, of the alphabet, and finally of various languages, the pupil finds a background for the study of the English language. When studying the development of his own language, he sees how much it owes to other languages and peoples through the ages. An appraisal of modern English teaches him to be tolerant of dialectal differences and of foreign speech in America. By means of specific examples in everyday life, the historical and cultural material becomes practical for the pupil.

General language is not intended to replace the first few weeks of the high school language courses, nor is this possible, because of the transfer to different schools after eighth or ninth grade work is completed. The actual study of a language should require only the amount of time necessary for determining linguistic ability and arousing interest.

From the writer's experience, Latin proves the best introductory language for the experimental section of the course. The study of Latin serves merely as a sample of what the pupil would find in studying any foreign language. As Latin with its many influences on English is of more practical use for Americans, who seldom need to speak foreign languages, Latin is better than French, German, or Spanish, when the limits of the course permit only one language to be studied. Throughout the course the modern foreign language, or languages, taught in the high school should be emphasized where the opportunity occurs. Thus, the course will fulfil the re-

quirements of guidance in choice of language study and of introduction to language activities.

Before beginning to teach a general language course, the teacher should know both the immediate and ultimate attainments for the pupil. The following are those the writer has found valuable.

#### IMMEDIATE ATTAINMENTS

1. Understanding of the origin and nature of language
2. Knowledge of a history of the English language
3. Knowledge of the contributions of the Greeks, Romans, Anglo-Saxons, and other races to the English language
4. Acquaintance with foreign language study in the actual study of Latin
5. Acquaintance with other languages and with their relative importance for our civilization
6. Increased knowledge of vocabulary and of English grammar through a study of the story of words and of Latin grammar
7. Appreciation of the educational values of language study

#### ULTIMATE ATTAINMENTS

1. Guidance in consideration of language study in the high school
2. Appreciation of modern culture as a heritage from ancient culture
3. An understanding of people and customs in other countries
4. Tolerance and a critical attitude toward different dialects or speech
5. Increased language skill in English or in a foreign language
6. Appreciation of the debt English owes to other countries
7. Language-consciousness and the desire to speak better and more nearly correct English

Above all, the teacher should remember that the purpose of the general language course is to *interest* pupils in language rather than to amuse them. He must always be aware of the pupils' interest and acquirement. Frequent reference to the attainments expected will remind the teacher of the educational purposes of the course.

The success of a course in general language depends largely upon the ability of the teacher to make the material live for the pupils. Thorough preparation of the daily lesson plans is especially important. If the teacher has read widely and thought over the material with his pupils in mind, he should be able to present the material in a vivid and interesting way. Anecdotes and stories illustrative of the various phases of language will help to keep alive the interest of the pupils.

Careful planning and organization of the course will avoid dull class periods and the resultant aversion to language study. Before beginning a

unit, the teacher should read available material, verify school library references, and organize a working program adapted to his class. He should make tentative daily lesson plans, which he will revise during the progress of the unit so that they will be better suited to class interest and ability. Each unit should be presented as a whole by means of a brief introduction. At the end of work upon the unit, an appraisal of the outcome is essential for evaluating the habits, attitudes, and appreciation developed in the pupils, and the information acquired by them.

The pupils should participate as much as possible in interesting and useful language activities. Correlation with other subjects—especially English, history, art, homemaking, shop, and music—shows the pupils the broad application of language in other classes. Through projects and learning experiences in the general language classroom, the pupils develop a spirit of cooperation and social relationship. By keeping a notebook to serve as an individual text, they learn self-reliance and develop a sense of responsibility. The teacher should strive to apply the language study to situations in the practical life of his pupils so that they will have an awareness of the importance of using their language well.

Units of study must be flexible, to be developed or condensed according to the time allowance and the pupils' interests. It is best to omit what cannot be covered adequately enough to give the pupils an understanding of the material. Although a certain amount of detail is necessary, the teacher should be careful not to obscure the main theme of the unit by excessive attention to the minor details. The many possible implications under the heading of language will no doubt tempt the teacher to follow some phase of the subject not related to the main theme being taught. While brief digressions in class at the leading of the children's interests will often prove worthy of the time spent, the teacher must remember the plan of the course and try not to deviate too far from the central aims.

Regarding the subject matter of this introductory course in language, it is proper to begin with "What 'Language' Means," for pupils do not have an accurate conception of the broad meaning of the term "language." They do not appreciate art, music, dancing, etc. as language mediums; they do not realize the complexity of man's language, and do not know how useful are the five senses. They can readily find examples of "language" as it is employed by animals, in books, and by plants; and they easily understand what knowledge is communicated by taste, smell, touch, sight, and hearing. When they evaluate the senses, they find that the chief means of receiving information are sight and hearing. Here belong the important communications by writing, gestures, art, dancing, speech, and music. Formulating a definition, we may say that language then is a means of communicating with others by gestures, sounds, or written symbols. Of course, pupils will observe that man can remember and pass on knowledge, as well as merely

express his feelings. Therefore they will realize that man's language is more complex than the other communication of the world.

After the pupils have a clear interpretation of what language is, they should be curious about the origin and development of speech. Appreciation of speech as a remarkable invention, and a critical attitude toward theories about the origin of speech are worthy objectives of the second unit of study. Imagining life without speech, pupils enjoy sign messages and are quick to see the limitations of such clumsy communication. They also find interesting the *goo-goo*, *bow-wow*, *pooh-pooh*, *ding-dong*, and *yo-he-ho* theories of how man began to speak. Discussion of these ideas of the origin of speech leads to real thought about the probable explanation—repetition of a meaningful sound. A summary of the development of words, dialects, and languages causes them to evaluate speech in the world today, when ninety percent of our communication depends on conversation, radio, telephone, and talking pictures. History of the early ages can easily be integrated with the study of early man's system of speech, and special notice can be taken of speech habits throughout the unit of study.

Following the use of speech, writing and alphabets are the next developments in the history of language. Pupils should appreciate the marvelous invention of writing, and the contributions of ancient cultures to our alphabet. For linguistic and historical interest, an acquaintance with ancient forms of writing, and knowledge of important archeological discoveries are fundamental acquirements. With relation to the present, pupils can find remains of picture and symbol writing in modern English and can recognize the imperfections in our alphabet.

Early writing by knot and notch records or by lines and pictures, then pictograms, like Chinese writing, and later ideograms, trace the history of writing. Simple object messages led to pictures and symbols representing the object and the idea related to it, as our numerals and symbols do in the picture of a pebble for zero, etc. Egyptian hieroglyphics, Babylonian cuneiform, and the Phoenician alphabet as ancestors of our letters are interesting to pupils and teach them history as well as language. Pupils like to see how the drawing of an ox-head became our letter A, and how a picture of a house became a B. Other alphabets which lead to ours are the Hebrew, Greek, and Roman. A short survey of the development of writing materials and books is advisable. Phonetic writing shows pupils the limitations of the English alphabet, which has fifteen ways of spelling the sound of the letter I. Many activities can be used with the material presented here; for example, a "grapevine" telegraph will illustrate the weakness of speech and show the need for writing messages.

An attitude of world citizenship is the primary attainment for the pupils in the study of a unit on the different languages in the world. Included in this objective are tolerance toward foreigners and foreign accents, acquaint-

ance with the modern foreign language offered in the high school, knowledge of the common origin of languages and of their distribution, and appreciation of similarities and differences in languages. Pupils like to know the large number of languages and which are most widely spoken, and they can readily grasp the percentage of each by making a map of the language world. Comparison of words in the Indo-European family and contrast of words from other languages prove fascinating. Naturally, the emphasis is placed on the languages usually offered in high school—Latin, French, Spanish, and German. Pupils are especially eager to hear the languages spoken. After a brief study of a selected modern language, it is well to finish with a little about the proposed world language, Esperanto, with its minimum of grammar rules. Discussion of reasons for a world language stimulates thought. Many interesting activities, including speaking common expressions in the modern language desired, are possible.

For pupils to understand the development of English from many sources, it is necessary for them to know its history. Appreciation of the peoples who contributed to English, especially the Anglo-Saxons, is valuable at this point in the course. Britons and early Roman colonists brought only a few words, but the Anglo-Saxon conquest gave rise to Old English with its complex structure and Runic alphabet. While noting the simplification of inflections, pupils can see how many common words, including "the," came from Anglo-Saxon. Then with the coming of Christianity to England, Latin and Greek church words entered, and pupils also find common words coming from the Scandinavians. The Norman-French conquest gave new words which fused with Anglo-Saxon to make Middle English. Examples of Chaucer's English, which sounds like a foreign language, show how far modern English has developed from the Midland dialect. Modern English, through the Reformation and Renaissance and under Shakespeare's great ability, continued to give the characteristics of today's English with its few inflections and constant changing. Pupils also like to know how English of today differs in America and England. Making a map of Europe, with arrows pointing to England from the countries influencing its language, is one activity. Another is a list of picturesque and colorful words heard, or seen in newspapers, for America has a real language of its own because of the influences peculiar to this country after English came to the New World.

The next unit of study should have as its objective the understanding of the composite nature of English through the various influences on it. Pupil attainments related to this primary aim are: knowledge and acquaintance of contributions; knowledge of roots, prefixes, suffixes, and understanding of their significance in vocabulary; and increase in vocabulary. Percentages of Latin, native English, Greek, and other languages, with examples of words borrowed in pure and derived forms, will give an idea of the picturesque quality of English. Pupils really enjoy knowing what



languages gave us "banana," "waltz," or "tapioca." After a study of the formation and derivation of words, pupils will enjoy looking for newly-coined words, such as "fifth columnist," and slang in English. Much use of the dictionary for "family trees" of words from Latin, native English, and Greek roots, and for picture-meanings of unusual words, like "assassin" or "tantalize," will be valuable for better English. Also, in mathematics, graphs of percentages of languages will teach good habits. Word games and analysis of newspaper headlines for derivation of words will help build vocabulary.

An appreciation of our modern heritage from the ancient Greek culture, which was at a peak of civilization, is the attainment of the following unit. Since both Greek life, with its Biblical examples, and mythology, with its legendary stories, are common in modern literature, these are the principal topics. Emphasis is on well-known myths of the Trojan War, of Ulysses' wanderings, and of individual gods and goddesses, such as Ceres and Cupid. Especially interesting to pupils is the modern application of mythology in advertising (Argus camera), in names of flowers (Narcissus), stars (Orion), planets (Mars), cities (Athena), and in literature (*Atalanta's Race*). Imaginative pupils will enjoy dramatization of myths, and attractive posters can be made in art classes.

After learning our debt to the Greeks, the next subject of study is the debt we owe to the Romans. Pupils need to be aware of the widespread use of Roman ideas and of the Latin language today. Understanding of the value of Latin for vocations, appreciation of Roman culture as the greatest of its time, and enjoyment of an imaginary trip to Rome will bring to pupils a real awareness of their debt to the Romans. Why English owes so much to the Romans is explained by the extent of Roman civilization and language over most of the world known at the time of the Roman Empire. In planning an imaginary trip to Rome, pupils can have all the excitement of preparing for a real voyage. Upon their arrival at Naples, a description of terrain and people, historical anecdotes, songs, signs a traveler would see, and unusual customs of Italy compared with those of another country (France, Spain, or Germany) add considerable interest. From a survey of modern Pompeii and Rome, the unit proceeds with a brief history of ancient Rome and a study of its remarkable customs. Lastly, pupils will see how Latin lives in the months of our calendar, in medical terms, in scientific words in natural sciences, in the Catholic Church, in familiar mottoes, in law, in modern advertising names, in mathematics, in music, and in much English vocabulary. Innumerable activities on the value of Latin in vocations and in modern life may be chosen for individual projects according to pupil interest. On the return trip, pupils may decide to pass through the country whose language is offered to them in the high school. This will give



an opportunity for a little experimental study of the modern language desired.

Following the introduction to Latin, pupils will be eager to explore the language itself. This unit in which they become acquainted with study of a foreign language should result in increased language skill, better understanding of English grammar, increase in vocabulary, and interest in Latin. By actual study of Latin, pupils learn pronunciation, vocabulary, classroom expressions, and simple grammar. As they can pronounce Latin readily with little practice, they enjoy memorizing the poem, "Mica, mica, parva stella." Vocabulary, which should be learned through English derivatives, must be limited to first declension nouns and adjectives, first conjugation verbs in the present tense active voice, and a few necessary pronouns, adverbs, propositions, and conjunctions. In grammar, case uses are the most important, then adjective position and agreement, and verb forms. Classroom expressions are helpful in arousing interest and in creating good habits of pronunciation. These language activities correlate with English classwork, and notebook work teaches organization and neatness. The unit should serve to determine fitness for language study in high school.

The romance of words and names must not be overlooked for the appreciation of the stories to be found there. From the unit pupils should attain a critical attitude toward correct usage of vocabulary, a desire to know histories of words, understanding of the origins of word meanings, increased vocabulary, and curiosity about origins of names. Pupils will enjoy analyzing our word population—dead words, old-fashioned words, natives, foreigners, twins, married words, newborn words, and families of words. Word stories from mythology and history, and words from names of persons or places, lead to study of the meaning of such names; for everyone likes to know what his name meant originally, and the names reveal much of our historical and linguistic development. Transfer of word meaning is also evident in the use of parts of the body for verbs, as "*toe* the mark," or of animals in expressions such as "*dog*-eared." Naturally, they show great interest in the meaning of boys' and girls' personal names. With much surprise, they discover that surnames originated from description of personal appearance or habits and occupation, from nature, from names of weapons and utensils, from patronymics, and from modified foreign names. As for place names, their origin is extremely varied—from persons' names, from different languages, from descriptive terms, or from transfer from other places, and even some purely fanciful names, like "Hell-fer-Sartin" or "Henpeck City."

For practical language work, a survey of present-day English in America provides an understanding of the varied character of the American English which pupils themselves speak. A knowledge of what "standard" English is, appreciation of American English as more vivid than British English,

understanding of American dialects as almost homogeneous, and understanding of the causes of change in language are secondary attainments. Because of the "strange" terms used in England, such as "sock-suspenders" for men's garters or "reel of cotton" for a spool of thread, pupils will delight in noting differences. They will be quick to find examples of American enrichment of the English language—through Indians, Mexicans, sports-writers, Hollywood, Wall Street, westerners, pioneers, negroes, the government, and American life. Realization of the mechanical differences, and the unifying influences at work, should make pupils aware of language problems today. Levels of usage and regional differences are worthy of consideration here, because pupils seldom recognize the identification stamp of language for their social position and location. As children like to know "why," an explanation of reasons for change in language and vocabulary will suffice to emphasize the changing character of the English which they speak.

The final unit sums up the preceding eleven and shows the pupils how to apply the material of their general language course. Such a unit logically includes testing, measurement of growth, and listing of results. First, each unit in the course is reviewed for a summary of the principal ideas. Then, pupils definitely plan application of the course in better use of language, and better understanding of language study.

Under the direction of an interested and capable teacher, the foregoing course of study can be adapted to any group and modified to meet specific needs. Units are not of equal duration; and some may be shortened, or omitted entirely, if time is limited. On the other hand, the wealth of material available on each topic will permit enlargement of any unit according to pupil interest and need.

This article would be incomplete without a mention of books particularly suitable for eighth or ninth grade pupils. Though many additional books should be at hand for reference, and the general language textbooks already published will give suggestions, the following list will serve for the initial planning of the material of the course.

American Classical League Service Bureau, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee. . . . Bulletins on derivation and word study, pictures and articles.

Barker, Grimm, and Hughes, *The Story of Earliest Times* (New York, Row, Peterson, 1936)

Barnes, Franklin and Hayes, E. L., *The Story of Writing and Languages* (Chicago, Follett, 1938)

Bellafiore, Joseph, *Words at Work* (New York, Amsco School Publications, 1939)

Blancke, W. W., *General Principles of Language* (New York, D. C. Heath, 1935)

- Brennan, Loane, and Englar, *Exploring Latin* (New York, American Book, 1933)
- Fee, Violet and Walter R., *Unit Study Books*, #252, #402, #405, #410 (New York, American Education Press)
- Ilin, Marshak, *Black on White; the Story of Books* (Philadelphia, J. G. Lippincott, 1932)
- Jespersen, Otto, *Growth and Structure of the English Language* (New York, G. E. Stechert, 1905)
- Mencken, H. L., *The American Language* (New York, A. A. Knopf, 1936)
- Sabin, Frances E., *Classical Myths That Live Today* (New York, Silver Burdett, 1940)
- Sabin, Frances E. *Relation of Latin to Practical Life* (M. R. Sabin, Jonesboro, Tennessee)
- Webster's *New International Dictionary* (Springfield, Mass., G. & C. Merriam Co., 1940)
- Webster's *Picturesque Word Origins* (Springfield, Mass., G. & C. Merriam, 1940)

"FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR THE 'AIR AGE'!"

"AMERICANS, AWAKE TO LANGUAGE NEEDS!"

"FOREIGN LANGUAGES FOR GLOBAL WAR AND GLOBAL PEACE!"

## *Vocabulary Learning Enjoyable* *Making a Proper Use of Proper Dictionaries*

HUGH J. LIEBESNY  
*New York City*

(*Author's summary.*—Individual vocabulary development and vocabulary learning need not necessarily mean toil and trouble. Origin, history and relationship of words, the close ties between English and French offer an invaluable help.)

WHICH is the best method of vocabulary learning?" The question sounds naïve, but generations of students, young and old, have asked it, and will ask it again and again. On the other hand scores of teachers have dealt with the same, apparently inexhaustible problem. Approaching it this time from a specific angle, however, may prevent this contribution from being ranged in a line with the well known coals of Newcastle.

Each of the customary techniques has its own merits, and it is natural that, to a large extent, it depends upon conditions inherent in the individual which method fits him best. Educational, professional and living conditions, knowledge of other foreign languages, age of the student are likely to be decisive factors, let alone the grade of knowledge of the idiom in question.

At present there is a special group of people in this country confronted with our problem. They are the newcomers from Europe who entered the States during the recent years, manifold in their national origin, people of all stages of life, education and culture.

They include a broad intellectual class anxious to acquire an efficient working vocabulary adequate to the unequalled abundance and versatility of the English language. Many of them have outgrown their school-boy-shoes long ago, and, unlike the young generation, must do without the guidance of formal English schooling. Occupied and preoccupied with a lot of other serious things, it is understandable that their mind revolts against the drudgery of monotonous mechanical word memorizing. Hence they embark on extensive reading. That need not necessarily be the right way either, as there are not a few who hope for quick results by stuffing down their throats indigestible quantities of reading substance, and who, coming across an unknown word, find it much too annoying to look it up. They do not care about catching the precise import, and either they skip it nonchalantly, or they try to guess the sense, hit or miss. Whether this way a word is likely to take root in the reader's memory at best depends upon how "easy" or "difficult" it is, and how frequently it recurs in the context. Therefore, unless we stick to a systematical procedure, step by step and without haste,—at least at the beginning—, a really satisfactory success hardly can be expected. It is always the same thing, whatever the kind of study we are prepared to do.

An invaluable help to make vocabulary work stimulating and a source of lasting enrichment is origin, history and relationship of words. We hesitate to use the scholarly word "etymology" because nobody interested in our ideas ought to be scared by the suspicion of being carried into scientific domains far beyond his intentions and abilities. All the same, let us call the thing with its proper name, and see what use we can make of it.

The English language is distinguished from any other idiom through its dualistic or bilingual character combining Germanic and Romance elements. For a long time a certain philological school liked to classify "English" as a Germanic language, and many foreign students approach its study with that erroneous idea in mind. It is true that "Anglo-Saxon" and "Old-English," the original basic elements of modern English, are Germanic, but in the course of more than two thousand years Romance words and word roots, Latin and French above all, have influenced the development of the English vocabulary to an extent which gave the Romance element a preponderance over the Germanic of about two to one.

Under these circumstances it may not be surprising that we succumb to the temptation of approaching our etymological technique primarily from the Latin-French sector. But there is still another reason to it. Most of the students from Europe as mentioned above have a fair knowledge of French, the one by birth, others by education. Someone would have been on more or less good terms with Latin too, but in any case our requirements in both French and Latin will prove not to be extravagant.

Let us assume one of our students thumbing a recent edition of *The New York Times* would come across this passage:

"We return to our favorite arithmetical diversions. This time it is again *percentage* and *ratios*. They are *dangerous masters*, but very *useful servants*. They can shake our *faith in human nature*, and they can bolster our *affection for the human race*."

The Romance, respectively French note of these few sentences, selected quite at random, is striking. Among twenty different nouns, verbs and adjectives there are fourteen words of Romance origin (in italic type). However, in the course of centuries they have become so completely naturalized that while we use them a hundred times a day it does not occur to us that long ago they entered the English vocabulary as foreign words.

But now it is about time to watch our technique as it works, and to that end we assume our student would be interested in the words FAITH, DIVERSION and RATIO. Some equipment though is required before we set to work: A good English dictionary with etymological information, for instance Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. This meets fully our requirements and is not expensive;<sup>1</sup> (one of the ordinary bilingual dictionaries, of course,

<sup>1</sup> Other sources are: Webster's New International Dictionary, the Oxford English Dictionary, the Shorter Oxford, etc.

would not do); a note book and pencil, and some patience and assiduity, which, however, need not be mistaken for midnight-oil-burning.

Thus equipped we begin with looking up "FAITH."

Webster defines: "*faith*, n., 1. Belief in God, revelation, or the like . . . 2. Fidelity to one's promises . . . or to a person; loyalty; 3. . . 4. Complete confidence, esp. in someone or something open to question or suspicion."<sup>2</sup>

It is clear that in our reading example *faith* is to be understood in the meaning of definition 4.

As to etymology we learn:

"OF (Old French) *feid*, *feit*, later *fei*, F (French) *foi*, fr. L (Latin) *fides*.<sup>3</sup>

The derivation of *faith* from its original Latin ancestor *fides* is very instructive to us. It reveals the intimate relationship between *faith*, *fidelity* and *confidence* (see definitions 2 and 4), and explains the synonymy which within certain limits, exists between them. On the other hand it is obvious that the immediate source of *fidelity* and *confidence* is French,—*fidélité* and *confidence* (*confiance*). If we spare no pains looking up the dictionary for *fidelity* we would get into contact with another word of the same origin, namely *fealty*, fr. (L) *fidelis*, faithful,—and defined as "1. Fidelity of a vassal to his lord; 2. . . state of being faithful or loyal."

Summing up, what is the effect of our "research" work? Well, we have made or refreshed the acquaintance with such words as *faith*, *fealty*, *fidelity*, *confidence*, we have found that they all are close relatives belonging to the same WORD FAMILY, and so it will be easy to pick up some more members of that kinship, such as *confidant* and *confident*, *confidential*, to *confide* and others. Rummaging our knowledge of French we welcome the opportunity of meeting again their French cousins,—in the same order—, *confident* and *confiant*, *confidentiel*, *confier* etc.

Encouraged by the foregoing, not too complicated findings we have become curious to learn what "DIVERSION" has to tell us.

Defined as: "1. Act of turning anything aside from its course or (a person) from an occupation or purpose, 2. That which diverts; that which relaxes, amuses . . ."

it is evident that definition 2 applies to our case. As to its etymology, however, we have to look whether *divert* (compare definition 2) provides for a proper clue, which it really does. We find: "*divert*, v.t., OF. *divertir*" (the same in modern French), "fr. L. *divertere* . . . turn aside, fr. *di+vertere* to turn." At once we are reminded of (F) *divertissement*, [from (F) *divertir*] which also appears in the English vocabulary, to be sure as a foreign word.

Thus far we have gathered but a small group,—diversion, to divert and *divertissement*. Yet, unconsciously or mindful of word-making by combin-

<sup>2</sup> We omit parts not essential to our purpose.

<sup>3</sup> In further examples we won't quote historical intermediate links unless they are necessary for the understanding.



ing a certain root with various prefixes or suffixes, we are led to associate our trifolium with quite a number of other closely related words: *Aversion*, to *avert*, *averse*; *conversion*, to *convert*, *convertor*, *convertile*, *convertible*; *inversion*, to *invert*, *inverse*; *reversion*, to *revert* and *reverse*, and many others. That they all are connected through the common ancestral origin,—(L) *vertere*—, is too obvious as to require a further explanation, just as the fact that, in some way or another, each of them expresses the basic idea of to turn. But experience tells us that with the image of this assemblage as a whole in mind we easily recall each member individually.

As to the third word "RATIO," meaning proportion, we may be permitted to mention only the interesting reference in the dictionary to *reason* and the French *raison*.

In selecting our examples we purposely abstained from using "big" or "bookish" words. It is primarily the man with a simple average vocabulary to whom we wish to make our idea understandable and palatable, and who needs to be encouraged through the consciousness that building up an efficient vocabulary stock not necessarily means toil and trouble.

On the contrary—it can be as interesting as any other study or business, and as pleasant a diversion and relief as any hobby. Let us recall that language is man's greatest invention, the tool of all tools. We only are accustomed to take it thoughtlessly as something natural, quasi innate. Words are the personification of ideas, and, inasmuch as etymology is inseparable from the history of thousands of years of human evolution, it is amazing to see how any simple every-day word reflects that development. In this respect too a good dictionary is a mine of information which makes its use so enjoyable and a source of intellectual profit.

As an illustration let us examine the noun "POUND."

Every child, native or foreign born, likely would ridicule the idea of looking it up in a dictionary. We know pound is a unit of weight. We also know "lb" as the symbol for pound. Furthermore it is known that the gold monetary unit of Great Britain is called "*pound sterling*," with the symbol "£."

Here we stop. What has money got to do with weight? We have to jump back a few thousand years to get the answer, back to the time when the nations then settled around the Mediterranean Sea had the idea of introducing metal as a means of exchange and payment. Minting of coins, however, representing a certain fixed value, was still unknown, and therefore people had recourse to cutting and weighting a piece of metal adequate to the amount due. In the countries of Latin tongue they said *ponderare* for to weigh and *pondo* for weight and pound. At a glance we overlook the straight etymological way leading from (L) *pondo* via Anglo-Saxon *pund* to (E) *pound*. As to pound sterling it is clear after that that originally it meant one pound of metallic silver.

The explanation of the two symbols lb and £ carries us upon another

interesting trace. Both of them are abbreviations for *libra*, meaning a weight of twelve ounces, and a Latin synonym for *pondo*, (a derivative from *librare*, to weigh). It reappears in French as "*la livre*"—pound in the original and in monetary sense, which later entered the English vocabulary as "*livre sterling*,"—one £.

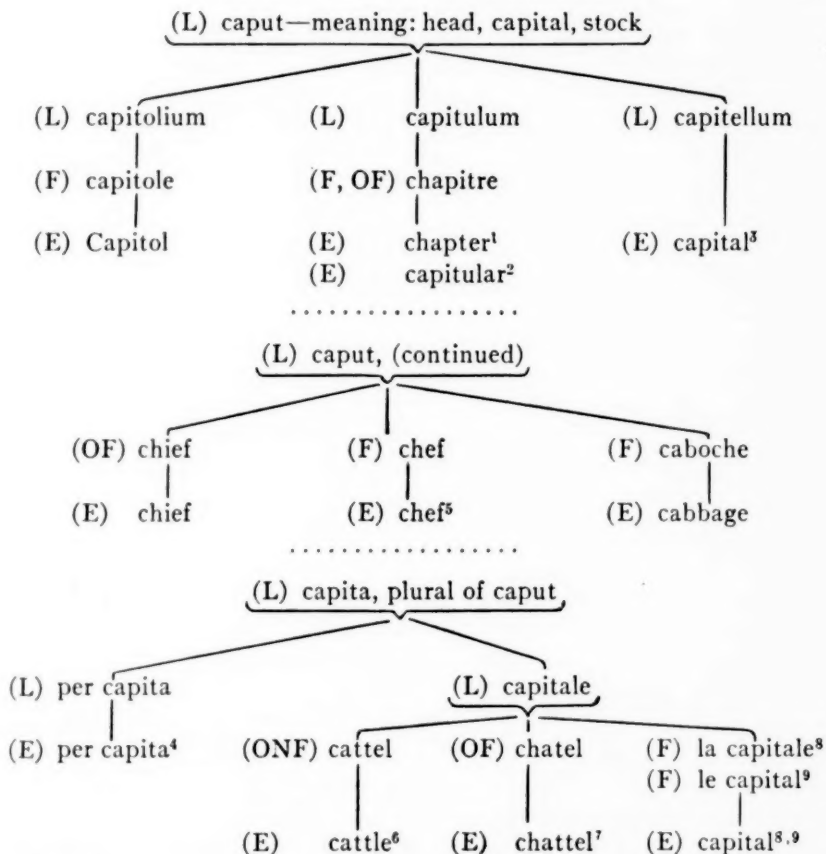
Yet all that does not exhaust the profit to be expected from a further attentive reading of the dictionary. It is conspicuous that under the item *to weigh* we meet the definition "*to ponder in the mind, consider carefully*," and, on the other hand, under item *to ponder* the definition "*to deliberate*" which also is defined as "*careful in considering*." Both are derived from the Latin words already known to us—*ponderare* and *librare*, to weigh. In a flash we understand how terms for abstract ideas, by way of some metaphorical process, developed out of man's early vocabulary for concrete things. Once we have become aware of this phenomenon, it will prove to be another step in widening our linguistic horizon, as it enriched man's capacity of expression before. Thus, as far as our example is concerned, we now have come to know how to use *ponder* and *deliberate* as synonyms of *to consider*, and easily we will compile the various derivatives grouped around them.

Before concluding this chapter we believe it extremely instructive to refer to a word test for college students published some time ago. One of the words then to be explained was "CHATEL." The word belongs, we reveal it in advance, to the family of (L) *caput*, the members of which from "*Capitol*" down to "*cabbage*" are scattered over wide regions of human thinking and doing.

The Latin *caput* means "head." That gives us the clue to the ancient name of the "Capitoline Hill," the *capitolium*, which dominates the Forum Romanum in Rome. "Cabbage" also symbolizes the notion of "head," and is linked with *caput* through the French word *caboché*, meaning cabbage. We shall be surprised at the great number of words in which the idea of "head" recurs. (See the chart farther below.)

As to "*chattel*," indeed, the origin does not disclose itself quite so openly, Defined as: "... Law: any item of movable or immovable property, except real estate . . .," its origin is referred to as "OF. *chatel*, See CATTLE." We know cattle is "live animals held as property," and we find that etymologically it is described as "OF. *catel*, fr. L. *capitale* . . . fr. *caput*—head, capital, stock." Casting finally a glance upon the item "capital . . . F., fr. L. *caput*—head," we know all the milestones marking the long road from the old Latin *caput* down to the modern *chattel*. What do they tell us?

Cattle, capital and chattel—all of them represent in a way the notion of property, and *caput*, as we have seen, is their common origin. Again we remember the early ages of civilization, this time the period which preceded the first attempts of payment in metal. Then the most prominent



<sup>1</sup> division of a book; assembly of clergymen etc. <sup>2</sup> member of an ecclesiastical chapter; <sup>3</sup> head of a column, architecture; <sup>4</sup> by heads; <sup>5</sup> a head cook; <sup>6</sup> and <sup>7</sup> see foregoing text; <sup>8</sup> city; <sup>9</sup> property.

item of property and the generally accepted means of barter was livestock. Hence, the amount of a man's wealth used to be assessed by counting the heads,—*capita*—, of his cattle. In another word, this stock was his capital. Now back to our starting point CHATTEL it is evident after all that here too the clear and simple logic of language was at work in forming out of the most concrete CATTLE (OF. *cattel*) a specific term for the jurisprudential idea of movable property in general.

We have identified three of the characteristic members of this interesting word family. In order to link with them a number of other close relatives we are going now to use a schematical method, similar to the generally known genealogical charts. We consider this practice as a means of concentrated reference, suitable, above all, as a support to the student's visual

memory. (Conditions of space oblige us to divide the chart into three sections.)

The idea of learning words in groups is not new. We meet the same suggestion repeatedly in textbooks and manuals dealing with the problem of vocabulary building, though with another kind of word groups, or "families" in mind than what we, in a narrower sense, understand under this term. Their principle consists in grouping a number of "*compound-words*" around one common basis word, or "head-word," for example: *Philo*-sophy, *philo*-logy, *phil*-anthropy, *phil*-ately, *phil*-harmonic, biblio-*phile*, Franco-*phile*, etc.

Such word compositions are always the result of an advanced, artificial process, in contrast to the primogenial word forms shaped through natural etymological development, either in their native land itself, or in a foreign climate after their transplantation. (In this respect we refer to the genealogies compiled in this article.) In any case it is incontestable that no modern cultural language could do without the thousands of such terms. Many have been handed down from the ancient Greek and Latin vocabulary, whereas, in our days, modern ideas and science,—largely in the desire to coin acute terms of international currency—, also the eccentricity of certain high-brow writers, are continually at work creating new expressions. Telling more about this particular chapter of word-making and learning, however, is not within the scope of this article.

We have tried to give a plain description of the nature, procedure and efficiency of the "etymological" technique as suggested herewith. Guiding the reader on the hand of the dictionary, step by step, we not only attached great value to make him familiar with the gist of the method, but also we wanted to persuade him that, by no means, he is supposed to do scholastic research work. All he has to do is a proper identification and classification of the material presented so liberally by the dictionaries, to arrange and group it in a form best suited for his purposes, and, last but not least, to make the best possible use of his new accomplishments.

Altogether, this article, originally prompted by the needs of the foreign English-student, would be incomplete without considering our technique from the standpoint of the American born too. It goes without saying that it requires no adaptation whatsoever to serve the one like the other, however advanced the starting point of the American student might be according to the scope of his own English vocabulary stock. Undoubtedly he will be able to make the most of it if he has at least a fundamental knowledge of French.

With amazement he then will become conscious of the mutual enrichment flowing free and easy from the simultaneous, comparative study of both French and English. First that will become manifest in the growth of his word stock in both languages, but before long, and especially with a

little guidance to that effect, he will discover how much the two languages also have in common as to word order and idiomatic phraseology. The subtle elegance of the French style is largely due to the great variety of carefully discriminating expressions for every shade of thinking, feeling and doing. The deeper we penetrate this secret of the French language the more we become responsive to the flavor and fine nuances distinguishing the great many synonyms of French origin which characterize the English vocabulary. It is an old truth that learning a foreign language promotes the knowledge of one's own mother tongue, and, if the latter happens to be English, one never will cease admiring the singular conditions which produced that versatile, flexible and utterly refined instrument, THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

"AMERICANS, AWAKE TO LANGUAGE NEEDS!"

## *The Army Technique in the High School Class*

MARJORIE R. BUSHNELL

*Central High School, Bridgeport, Connecticut*

“NEW techniques in foreign language teaching are particularly striking among the curriculum revisions. These new methods are proving unusually efficacious in the universities selected by the Army for language training. Students without special ability in languages are reported able to carry on a simple conversation in a foreign tongue after instruction of but eight days or still more amazingly, after only ten hours of intensive instruction.”

The above paragraph in the *Journal* of the American Association of University Women caught my eye, fired my imagination and put me on the defensive enough to make me want to do something about it. True, it was not the first time I had read or heard of such wonderful results in language learning as inspired by the army and navy technique. Former pupils coming back to visit “old” teachers had told us about these courses and were equally enthusiastic about them. It all made me think and wonder a lot about them, too. What does the Army have we foreign language teachers don’t have? Obviously, we have never been able to accomplish such miracles even if ninety-five per cent of us do employ the direct method.

I choose to ignore the underlying psychological reasons for the Army’s success, reasons too obvious for me to have to enumerate them, and to plead guilty to the current conclusion—I, a foreign language teacher, full of courses on methods, using phonograph records and similar modern equipment, am not able to approximate the results being claimed by the Army. Immediately I sought to adopt some of “their” methods and apply them on the high school level.

I had one excellent illustration to use as a pattern for my new technique. Some former pupils of mine, now studying Italian, described for me a sample problem presented to them by their instructor in Italian. The instructor entered the class one day and said, “This is your problem today, boys. You have landed in Sicily. Lying in the streets are the bodies of little children killed by bombs. Bending over them are weeping Sicilian mothers. What are you going to say to comfort them?” A real problem, a life situation, something very apt to happen. The challenge to the class was terrific, of course.

Naturally, we want problems quite different for a high school class, but they can be made to be almost as necessary. Let me be more concrete.

I tried this technique the other day in first year Spanish class. They had had Spanish for about a month, had drilled on the usual expressions: *buenos días, hasta mañana, etc.*, and had discussed their family and their



school by means of the usual modern exercises. Suddenly I said to them, "I am going to divide you into couples, give you a problem and two minutes to work it out together, after which you will be asked to present it to the class. Here is the problem—"you are old friends, you haven't seen each other for ages. You meet down-town and stop on the corner for a chat. What will you say to each other?" I allowed the two minutes to confer with each other because it was the first time I had tried the experiment with them and also because they were so very new to the language. The idea caught like magic. Couples vied with each other to present the most original cornerside chat before the class. It did work.

Just one more illustration to prove my point because I know the idea is not new to many of you. I tried the problem method in my second year French class only on a more elaborate scale, of course. The problem this time was food, ever appealing to all ages. In grammar we had been drilling on the partitive. As all French teachers know most grammar in their lessons of the partitive include a vocabulary of foods, the two naturally seem to go together. The first day we had grammatical drill on foods. The second day's assignment was for each pupil to make a dinner menu (a real artistic project on the part of many). This day's work also included a special topic on French cuisine and the dictation of a very good French recipe for mothers to try at home. By the third day we were ready for the problem, Army style: "You are ravishingly hungry, the only place to eat is in a French restaurant and the waiter does not understand English. Go ahead and get what you want to eat *in French*." The pupils again worked in couples, one being the waiter, the other the hungry soldier or WAC.

The results were amazing. The problem technique had worked again.

It is only October, but I feel I am going to have a lot of fun copying the Army in my high school classes. If it can not rightfully be called a copy at least I have been given a new thought which I know will give added zest to my teaching this year.

In conclusion, let me again quote from the same article in the A.A.U.W. *Journal*. "Language teachers . . . predict that the Army's new program will play a very large part in revolutionizing language teaching in schools and colleges after the war." I ask, why wait until after the war? The Army would be surprised to know that the revolution has come and many of us are being influenced by it right now.

## *Ends and Means in Language Teaching\**

M. C. MORRIS

*Manchester College, North Manchester, Indiana*

(*Author's summary.*—Our *modus operandi* will count as heavily in the immediate future as the job we are doing. A plea for intellectual honesty in defining objectives, and for a realistic attitude in facing the future.)

IN LANGUAGE teaching, as in other forms of human intellectual activity, there are certain legitimate, well recognized, "practical" or "short-range" objectives. These objectives change constantly. Continually they are being set up, tested, and knocked down again in favor of others, which, in turn, appear to fit the very latest conditions even better. There is likely to be considerable inefficiency in this process. It is a process, however, which is also likely to serve many good purposes. These practical, short-range objectives must not be lost sight of. For there are always new situations to be met realistically; new problems to be grappled with honestly; new evaluations to be made fearlessly. That is, if progress is the result desired.

Then there is another, no less legitimate, no less well recognized type of objective, referred to frequently as "impractical" or "long-range." This type changes infrequently, if at all, since it is expressed in values as basic as humanity itself. Periodically, however, the question arises as to whether this latter type may not temporarily be disregarded in consideration of the claims to greater urgency often made by the former. For while immediate objectives must be realized quickly, the more remote ones will "keep." They will still be there when the emergency has passed. They may then be recalled. They, too, may then receive their due share of attention. Meanwhile . . .

Meanwhile let us take a look at just one humble representative of the "practical" family of objectives: *understanding*. Certainly no one would deny that to make oneself understood, verbally or in writing, is one of the primary purposes of learning any language. Let us think of this objective, however, in its figurative rather than in its literal sense: we can only really understand our good neighbors when we know their language. The practical ability of conversing with, and understanding them opens up new avenues along which we may proceed to our broader, longer-range, less tangible objective: that of *human understanding*. If this seems more "impractical" to our professional minds, perhaps it is because it is even more difficult to gain real proficiency in it than in its more literal counterpart: linguistic understanding.

Yet it is of human understanding, that higher, more universal, more

\* Read at May, 1943 meeting of Indiana Teachers of German, Indianapolis.

permanent value of our work, that I wish to speak; particularly in its relation to wartime conditions.

Alexander Kroff, writing in the *Modern Language Journal*, has, I believe, well summed up this type of objective in the following sentences:

We are interested in presenting to our students the culture and civilization of a people. We no longer are teachers of French but of France, not only of German but of Germany.

We seek to create and develop worthy attitudes, interests and appreciations; these are our ultimate or permanent objectives. We seek to build up appreciative attitudes toward the people whose language and culture we present; we attempt to show how our own American heritage is composed of contributions from many foreign cultures, how each of these cultures can and does help to build and enrich an enlightened American way of life.

These objectives—international tolerance and understanding—are essential if we are to play a successful rôle in a new post-war interdependent world. We must prepare each young American to become a citizen of the world.<sup>1</sup>

I doubt if many language teachers in this country, even in wartime, would be apt to take exception to such a statement of purpose as this. But it seems to me that Mr. Kroff's statement needs to be developed a little further. For tolerance—"which [as Louis Adamic puts it] in practice means that you and I refrain from insulting one another"—is not enough. Willingness to accept the contributions made by others of different backgrounds than our own, and appreciation of them as co-citizens of the world presupposes a greater and more accurate knowledge concerning their lives, beliefs, hopes.

But knowledge of itself is not enough, either. Our radio programs, movie shorts, newspaper columns prove only too eloquently at the moment that "knowledge does not necessarily breed affection, nor affection justice."<sup>2</sup> In normal times, for instance, our students—let alone ourselves—would seldom think of referring either to each other or to their neighbors from other parts of the world as "greasers," "kikes," "dagos," "hunkies," "square-heads," "frogs," or "yellow-bellied apes,"—but in a world at war . . . ?

For at the present time, to borrow a phrase from *Time*, "restraints on free exchange of intelligence are all but universal" and "calculated propaganda has become all but universal too."<sup>3</sup> Under such conditions, how can we hope for either teachers or students to cultivate mutual understanding; how can we expect anything but one setback after the other in the attempt to remove handicaps of ignorance, prejudice and various types of provincialism? How can we look for the social lag to be overcome and social and spiritual progress at last to make strides in overtaking the technical advances which have so far outdistanced it? Shall we, with the majority of our colleagues, shrug our shoulders and murmur resignedly: "These

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Yale Kroff, *Modern Language Journal*, XXVII, No. 4, April, 1943, 237 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Time*, April 19, 1943, p. 104.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

things must be," or: "We must be realistic; this is no time for sentimental idealism, the stuff of which impractical dreams are made"—? Shall we be content to place our democracy on a domestic shelf for the duration or until such time as someone in Washington gets around to dealing anew with the problem? And meanwhile . . . ?

Perhaps this would be a good point at which to pause, to consider whether what has been said above may not be unduly pessimistic. For even the most superficial analysis of the present situation leads inevitably to a comparison with the conditions existing at a similar period during the last world war, a comparison which, I believe, most people would admit to be favorable to the situation existing so far during the present crisis.

Aside from the fact that hamburgers and sauerkraut have still not been rebaptized and one can probably still say "Guten Tag" or "Auf Wiedersehen" on the street without being arrested as a spy, it is true that this time there is little talk about hyphenated Americanism. Also, we enjoy comparative freedom of speech and of the press; for instance, foreign language newspapers, having been duly registered with the authorities, continue to appear. Civil liberties, too, seem to be observed to a greater extent than during the last war. Another marked difference is to be seen in the fact that in 1941, unlike 1917, there was no hysterical emotionalism, far less super-oratory, and no cheering and flower-throwing as the boys entrained to fulfill their grim duties in the far corners of the earth. The word "global" (with or without the congressional suffix) does seem to imply a new realization of responsibilities which will increasingly be ours as future citizens in a world commonwealth of whatever groups may emerge from the present struggle.

But above all is the fact that, whereas it took some five years after 1918 to rescind completely the laws prohibiting the teaching of "enemy languages" in our schools, there has this time been no move to abolish the study of German, Italian and Japanese. In fact quite the opposite, as the Intensive Language Program sponsored by the American Council of Learned Societies attests.

If, then, there is cause for optimism in the more liberal outlook prevailing so far in this war, this fact should not blind us to the dangers besetting our democratic way of life which are inherent in the prosecution of total war. Most of us have accepted such regimentation as we now have as necessary. In the absence of witch hunting and sensational spy trials, we tend to overlook the ominous fact that some 70,000 American citizens (of Japanese ancestry) against whom no charge had been brought were interned on the west coast, a tacit acceptance of the very racial conception of the state against which we profess to be fighting. Thus, under the plea of military necessity, new precedents are being set and accepted without question for the duration which may be as difficult to rescind later as the prohibition of

"enemy language" teaching was in 1918. It is enough, perhaps, to mention the fact that under the presidential order of February 19, 1942, any citizen may be removed from any area by military command and placed elsewhere without a hearing. And we now have pending the Austin Wadsworth total conscription and the Gurney Wadsworth permanent conscription bills, while "military necessity" through the O.W.I. controls short wave radios and to a great extent censors news.

It is only a logical concomitant of such emergency administrative action as this that the liberal studies, upon which training for life in a democracy basically depends, are becoming more and more circumscribed, while technical subjects of purely military value are being disproportionately stressed.

Illustrative of this trend is the story told recently by Professor Ingalls of Western College, about the young technical specialist who said to a professor in a large university: "Poetry, history, the great books, all that stuff, really aren't good for anything, you know." Then he hesitated, and as an irrelevant afterthought conceded: "Except, of course, they do make you think."<sup>4</sup>

If, from a military standpoint, the popular slogan: "In time of peace prepare for war" is at all justified, then it seems to me by the same logic that the opposite one: "In time of war prepare for peace" is even more important, especially if we have any hope that it will this time be a peace of any permanence. With over 250,000 of our uniformed young men taking technical courses in military education, with thousands more exempted from being immediately drafted on account of studies in war science, what about the relatively few liberal arts students for whom no deferment is made? This question may be worth thinking about, particularly in view of the fact that it is upon the latter group, in time of war, that the double responsibility of preparing for a just and durable peace devolves.

In this connection, may I quote from the recently published letter of a United States naval commander dated simply "somewhere at sea":

It takes skill, but not brains, to shoot and kill your enemy. It takes brains to make a friend of him. If we lose this fight not only have we lost the promise of the future, but so have Mann, Silone, Kagawa and all the simple, kindly people of Germany, Italy and Japan. If you people at home can make sure that someone with no axe to grind will do the peacemaking, you may accomplish more than those of us out here ducking the bullets.<sup>5</sup>

I do not wish to underestimate the importance of technical studies as preparation for modern civilization. On the other hand, I believe we cannot afford to blind ourselves to the fact that exclusively technical training can easily render a people susceptible to fascistic rather than democratic forms of government. For instance, I question seriously whether we are doing

<sup>4</sup> Jeremy Ingalls, "Is Education Expendable?" in *Common Sense*, March, 1943, p. 77.

<sup>5</sup> *Common Sense*, May, 1943, p. 175.



well at the present time to try to put all our eggs in the military basket. Courses in Military German, French etc. may have their proper place, but I believe that some of the military language texts now making their appearance are more opportunistic than they are opportune.

It seems evident to me that we still live in a world of cause and effect. In such a world, we usually get just about what we prepare for, and in proportion as we prepare for it. If we really desire a "just and lasting peace" to follow this war, we must prepare for it carefully, for peace is not a mere negative absence of war; it is the positive presence of justice and right. Like anything else worth having, this must be worked for and sacrificed for. Mutual knowledge is not enough, for knowledge alone may breed contempt rather than prevent hostility. Knowledge must be coupled with intelligence, for if intelligence abdicates or is unwilling to assume the responsibilities of solving *right now* the problems by which the nature of the next peace is being daily and hourly determined in men's minds, then lack of intelligence will be glad to finish the job, and, I am afraid, will prepare the way for World War III instead of preparing a just and enduring peace.

Right here it seems to me modern language teachers occupy a most strategic position—a position which entails a tremendous responsibility. In the first place, having lived or at least travelled abroad, we are not likely to fall back easily into that unthinking sixteenth-century attitude that every state that can conceivably injure us is *ipso facto* our "natural enemy," nor retain the provincial peasant attitude that "my things, my village are best; whatever is not mine is different and therefore inferior and to be despised or feared."

Again, we are in a position to recognize the full implications of the commonly quoted observation that in recent years the world has shrunk from the relative size of a football to that of a walnut. We can no longer take refuge behind new frontiers. Somehow or other we must learn to live with each other or go under as a civilization.

Moreover we will not be too quick to become slaves to facts; or to believe that mere surface reorganizations can ever permanently solve basic problems. Nor will we underestimate the difficulty of the job. We will realize that it will take all the courage (enough to buck social disapproval, where necessary), all the fidelity of purpose (and we can only expect real results in proportion as we maintain that), and, above all, all the faith in human nature (and what one of us could continue to teach without that?) of which we are capable.

Let me return for a moment to the Intensive Language Program of the American Council of Learned Societies. When I first heard that some 55 different courses in 26 "unusual" languages were being offered at some 20 colleges throughout the country, I was very much impressed. Later, upon further investigation, I realized that the purpose underlying this program



was purely that of "strategic language competence"; specifically: to prepare government men to interview military prisoners, carry on (or intercept) communications, spread propaganda, seek out fifth columnists, monitor broadcasts, and censor correspondence,—all legitimate military activities no doubt, and as such, highly practical and "realistic" from a relatively short-range point of view. But from the long view . . . ? Or with respect to the promotion of a non-retributive and therefore lasting peace . . . ? I do not believe we should forget the 17 or 18 colleges in which language courses form an important element of special curricula at present providing training for post-war relief and reconstruction work,—among them Columbia, Cornell, Yale, Bryn Mawr, Haverford, Swarthmore, Earlham and Antioch.

There are many specific applications of foreign language competence, of course; whether to equip soldiers, relief workers, tourists, or travelling salesmen. And each, in its own way, has far-reaching effects. But in the end I agree with President Davis of Smith College when he said:

We have a much bigger job to do than that, and one that has never been as important as it is now. We have to make the study of modern languages and literatures the means by which we can keep alive here, in another Renaissance, the civilization of Western Europe, and hand on that common culture which is not and has never been the possession of any single nation, but which is the common heritage of all those who are willing and able to receive it; which we are proud to acknowledge as

The anchor of our purest thought, the nurse,  
The guide, the guardian of our heart, and soul  
Of all our moral being.<sup>6</sup>

In attempting, then, to realize our long-range objectives even in time of war,—perhaps I should say *especially* now, when there is so much at stake,—I have tried to suggest that there are many encouraging elements in the situation we face; but that there are also many dangers. And I believe we ought to have the intellectual honesty to recognize these dangers; not in a spirit of hopeless pessimism but rather with the courage of what Albert Schweitzer called *Welt- und Lebensbejahung*.

Let us be realistic, by all means!—By all means which will serve the ends we desire. Technological advance in our day is so rapid that, as Aldous Huxley points out, it has often "merely provided us with more efficient means of going backwards."<sup>7</sup> We must be willing to work for our expressed objectives if we are to continue to say they are worth working for.

Let us not be fooled into thinking that the highest, most permanent of these objectives will "wait," undamaged, until we get around to working on them. Is it realistic to suppose that the greatest things require less vigilant attention than those of lesser importance, or that without such attention

<sup>6</sup> Herbert J. Davis, quot. from *Modern Language Journal*, XXVI, No. 2 (February, 1942), p. 142 f.

<sup>7</sup> Aldous Huxley, *Ends and Means*, Harper, N. Y., 1937, p. 9.

they will degenerate less rapidly than the latter? In the end, can the most genuine conception of realism ever be anything else than a reasoned, ethical idealism? Do we not still live in a world of inexorable cause and effect? Is it then realistic to focus all our attention on *ends* and disregard the *means*? "For the means employed inevitably determine the nature of the result achieved; whereas, however good the end aimed at may be, its goodness is powerless to counteract the effects of the bad means we use to reach it."<sup>8</sup>

By our attitudes and actions *right now* we are either helping, directly or indirectly, to usher in World War III, or we are helping to build the kind of world in which another world war cannot occur. As foreign language teachers, we have an unusually heavy responsibility in helping to determine the nature of the world of the future. But we also occupy an unusually strategic position. I believe each one of us will do well to heed Schiller's exhortation:

Der Menschheit Würde ist in eure Hand gegeben,  
Bewahret sie!  
Sie sinkt mit euch! Mit euch wird sie sich heben!

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 59.

"FOREIGN LANGUAGES—AMERICA'S NEED FOR THE FUTURE!"

## *Some Recent Trends in Modern-Language Teaching in the United States*

AARON SCHAFFER

*The University of Texas, Austin, Texas*

(*Author's summary.*—A statement of the history and aims of the teaching of the modern foreign languages and of some recent developments in the United States. Originally prepared for presentation to the Educational Policy Committee of The University of Texas.)

I HAVE been asked to prepare for our Educational Policy Committee a statement with regard to some recent developments in the teaching of the modern foreign languages in the United States with a view to enabling us to decide whether we should make any recommendations either to the departments concerned or to the General Faculty. Although I have myself always been convinced that the more a teacher knows about his subject the more interestingly he can present it to his students, and that, in consequence, it would be more advantageous for him to study his materials and his students as such than to spend much of his time investigating the methods employed by others, I willingly agreed to undertake the assignment, for several reasons. In the first place, I belong to what is, I fear, now looked upon by many as the old-fashioned school of those who firmly believe that a knowledge of a foreign language, and preferably of several foreign languages, should be a part of the intellectual baggage of every person who considers himself educated, irrespective of the manner in which that person earns or tries to earn his livelihood. Among those who agree with me are the members of the Committee on the Re-Statement of the Nature and Aims of Liberal Education, whose report, printed in full in the June, 1943, issue of the *A.A.U.P. Bulletin*, includes (p. 419) the ability "to use at least one other language with facility" among the skills "which liberal education helps men and women to develop." Similarly, Prof. Mark Van Doren, in his recently published *Liberal Education*, declares (pp. 131-132) that "at least one other language—Greek is still the best one for the purpose, and indeed for any purpose—should be equally known." In the second place, I know, somewhat to my chagrin, that some members of this committee do not share the conviction I have just expressed. And, in the third place and most important of all, whatever may be our individual persuasions on the subject, the war through which we are passing may have such far-reaching effects on all the major manifestations of our national life, including, notably, our educational system, that it seems wise for us all to be taking stock as to the success or failure of the teaching in our respective fields and to try to understand each other better than we have been doing in recent years. I might add, parenthetically, that, in my opinion, it is high time we stopped hurling epithets at one another and worked together towards the general improve-

ment of the enormously important enterprise in which we are all engaged; these days we are all living in houses of glass, and it would be a bold teacher, indeed, who would contend that the glass of his house is non-shatterable.

I need not remind a group of this sort that, until comparatively recently, no one was considered educated and cultured who was not familiar with the literary products of the two great antiquities, the Biblical and the Graeco-Roman, and that a reading knowledge of Greek and Latin was prerequisite to the title of scholar and gentleman. Whether or not such a title carries any distinction today or will do so in a world which is bound to be re-shaped by the present war is beside the point. The point is that those of our ancestors who received the standard education of their day had, in greater or less degree, a reading knowledge of Greek or Latin or Hebrew or of all three, and, at the very least, some notion, perhaps acquired at second hand, of what had been written in these languages. How else can we explain the taste of seventeenth-century English readers for Milton's *Paradise Lost* and *Samson Agonistes* or of French audiences of the same period for the *Andromaque* and *Phèdre* of Racine or of Germans of the late eighteenth century for Goethe's *Iphigenie auf Tauris* and of the English of the early nineteenth for Shelley's *Prometheus Unbound*? And it is a fact that, at least until the outbreak of the present war, the classical languages were still receiving far greater attention in western European countries than they were among us; else what would the admirers of Anatole France have made of his eulogies of "le beau Latin" and twentieth-century French audiences of such plays as Jean Giraudoux' *Electre* and *la Guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu* and *Amphitryon 38*? I have not the slightest hesitancy myself in deploring, on many counts, the low state into which the study of Greek and Latin has fallen in this country and in expressing what may be the totally futile wish that the return to international sanity might be accompanied by a revival of interest in the wise and beautiful words of Sophocles and Virgil. One writer (Prof. A. M. Withers of Concord State College, in "Our Language Health," printed in the June, 1943, issue of the *A.A.U.P. Bulletin*) feels so strongly on the subject of the utility of Latin and the modern foreign languages that he would like to see initiated "a movement to make compulsory for students intending to become teachers of English genuine first-hand knowledge of at least two modern foreign languages and Latin" (p. 397).

Be all this as it may, it was not until some fifty years ago that the teaching of the modern foreign languages—primarily French and German—began to establish itself firmly in our high schools, colleges, and universities. This phenomenon, accentuated by the addition, before many years had passed, of Italian and Spanish (and, most recently, of Portuguese) to college curricula, was probably at least partly responsible for the gradual decline of

interest in the classical languages; if this is true, it is regrettable, and we can hardly expect the classicists to shed many tears of sympathy if, as a result of the attacks that have been directed with increasing force against the humanities in the past ten years, the modern languages were to go the way of Greek and Latin. The teachers of modern languages, however, seem to me to be justified, on more grounds than that of mere self-interest, in pleading that their respective subjects not be allowed to disappear from the concern of those charged with drafting the educational policies in the publicly and privately supported schools of our country.

I shall not waste your time with any attempt to present an elaborate case for the value of foreign-language study. You are all familiar with the arguments pro and con; and your minds are no doubt already made up on the subject. You will permit me, however, to call your attention to a little pamphlet, *Foreign Languages in School and Life*, by Dr. E. H. Zeydel, professor at the University of Cincinnati and managing editor of the *Modern Language Journal*. After pointing out that Spanish and German are each spoken by 80 million people, French by 65 million, and Italian by 45 million (as compared with the 200 million who speak English and, he might have added, the 170 million who speak Russian), Prof. Zeydel discusses very briefly the "practical advantages to be gained by a working knowledge of a foreign language" and then passes to the consideration of seven significant broadly educational values inherent in foreign-language study which it is unnecessary for me to enumerate. Prof. Zeydel's contentions are commonplaces to all teachers of modern foreign languages and may be lightly dismissed by teachers of other subjects as conventional and old-fashioned. They are enormously reinforced, however, by the events of the past year. In a hard-hitting letter to the *New York Times* under date of Nov. 11, 1942, Prof. Mario A. Pei, of the department of Romance Languages at Columbia University, calls attention to the following somewhat paradoxical facts: 1) that "foreign-language teachers in the New York city high schools and colleges have been advised to take up the study of non-linguistic subjects—physics, chemistry, mathematics, shop work—with a view to having to teach these subjects later on as the war program in the institutions of secondary and higher learning unfolds and languages disappear from the high school and college curriculum"; 2) "that American troops stationed in Britain are being given instruction in French, German, and Italian"; and 3) "that a new front has been effectively opened by the American occupation of French North Africa." Prof. Pei argues that "knowledge, even in the form of a smattering, of the tongue of an ally or enemy may easily spell the difference between life and death, between escape and capture, to the individual soldier. To a military unit it may signify survival or extinction. To an army as a whole it may conceivably mean victory or defeat." And he closes his letter with the remark that "it is significant that

the three languages taught to the American troops in Britain, and apparently most needed by Gen. Eisenhower's men, are precisely the three that have been most neglected by American high schools and colleges, as indicated by registration figures—French, German, and Italian." Prof. Pei makes no mention of another very urgent practical consideration—the necessity of the knowledge of a foreign language for the thousands of Americans who will remain in the conquered countries long after the termination of the war as members of armies of occupation and of military governments. A few months ago, some twenty members of our faculty were invited to listen to and participate in the discussion of a report on the establishment of "military government" units in American colleges. The curriculum that was presented laid considerable emphasis—as it was bound to do—on the study of foreign languages. At this writing, the University of Texas has not been selected as one of these centers of training for "military government," perhaps because we are looked upon as a "naval" school exclusively; but the fact remains that our War Department considers a knowledge of foreign languages essential to the proper conduct of the war and to the proper administration of occupied countries. Wouldn't it seem to follow that the United States will never again be able to hold itself aloof from the rest of the world, and that the smug notion that English is the only language the masses of our educated citizenry need to know will have proved to be not only provincial but actually dangerous to the best interests of an enlightened world?

But, it is often and violently objected, students of foreign languages in our colleges complete their courses with nothing resembling a mastery of these languages. Very few of them, runs the charge, can frame, either in speaking or in writing, anything but the simplest sentences in the languages which they have studied for from two to four years, and these sentences would probably not be entirely free of grammatical mistakes; moreover, a great many of these students can not even read with fluency and comprehension the language they have studied. In the words of Vice-Pres. S. A. Nock, of Kansas State College of Agricultural and Mechanic Arts, quoted from an article, "A Huxley for the Humanities," in the April, 1943, issue of the *A.A.U.P. Bulletin* (p. 202): "The study of language today" (the author is criticizing the teaching of English as well as that of the foreign languages) "is not the learning to speak and write or even read: it is a technical subject, excessively dry, largely wrong, and thoroughly repellent. Yet an appreciation of language and its uses may be about as enlightening as any discipline we have." This is strong language, especially coming from one who is obviously a friend of the humanities; indeed, I consider it much too strong, for, on the testimony of many young men and women who have studied French with me in my twenty-three years' connection with this university, I should refuse to believe that the better students or even the



majority of the average students find the subject "thoroughly repellent." Admitting, however, that there is some truth to the charges leveled against us, I shall merely present the following facts in our defense: 1) our students, as a general rule, begin the study of a foreign language too late in their educational experience; 2) many of them have no overpowering desire to learn anything that demands consistent mental effort on their part; 3) our classes are too large and meet too seldom (the impossibility of teaching twenty-five students meeting 150 minutes weekly the ability to speak, write, and read a foreign language fluently even in three long-sessions could easily be demonstrated by simple mathematics); 4) some of our teachers are poorly trained or not possessed of sufficiently dynamic personalities; and 5) many of our teachers, yielding to outside pressures, distribute their energies and spend too much of their time and that of their students on the attempt to teach social and philosophical implications, literary and aesthetic appreciation, instead of concentrating upon the sufficiently difficult task of aiding in the acquisition of language-mastery as such. And yet, there are items on the credit side of the ledger. First of all, there is what may be called a negative entry, based on what seems to me to be the justifiable assumption that students, by and large, get as much out of their study of a foreign language as they do out of that of any other subject (the actual amount varying with their individual capacities and interests). But more important than this is the fact that our better students *do* leave us with an approximate working knowledge of the language they have studied. They read the present-day language with ease and understanding, as has been proved to my satisfaction by the fact that my students read and report intelligently on articles in *Pour la Victoire*, a weekly journal made up of signed essays on the political, historical, and philosophical aspects of the situation of France in the world of today. Moreover, their command of the elements of grammar in spoken and written expression is such that, with only a few months' residence in an environment in which they would have to forget their mother-tongue for the time being and use only French, they would readily acquire fluency and accuracy in both speaking and writing. That was my own experience and I have no doubt it would be theirs. How many teachers of other subjects could claim better results from their teaching? The point has been made that there is as much difference between a person who knows nothing at all of a foreign language and one who has studied it for as little as a year as there is between a deaf-mute and the possessor of the vocabulary of simple words large enough to enable him to fulfill all his most necessary functions in normal life. And I contend that, after several years' study of a foreign language, our students are far from being deaf-mutes in that language.

All this brings us to the questions: Shall the University of Texas do anything about its programme of modern-language teaching? Shall this

programme continue *in statu quo* or shall it be altered? Several factors combine to bring these questions into sharp focus just now. In the first place, by legislative enactment, Spanish is being taught in an increasingly larger number of the grade-schools of Texas as well as in the overwhelming majority of high schools and colleges of the state. What shall our Romance language department do to articulate its work with that of the graduates of such grade-schools and high schools? In the second place, science departments in the University seem to be more and more interested in the value of such languages as French, German, and Russian as aids to research and less and less in their value as a cultural and civilizing force, and science majors are demanding more and more vociferously special sections at all the elementary levels devoted exclusively to the reading of scientific materials in the respective languages. How far shall we go in the direction of meeting these demands? And, finally, the war has given a sharp impetus to the acceleration of the process of foreign-language mastery as it has to the teaching of all subjects in the army and navy programmes. The speed with which officers and teachers are now being trained by the various branches of the armed services may make us wonder whether we have not all been dilly-dallying too much in our teaching. In the words of one of my colleagues who has been serving in the army for more than a year: "The reason the army can train so rapidly for any positions it wants to fill is that it knows exactly what it is aiming at and requires the student to concentrate on that aim ten or more hours daily every working-day of the week." As an illustration of this fact, I quote from an article about the Japanese Language School for Naval Officers at Boulder, Colo., "A Phi Bete Goes to War," in a recent issue of *The Key Reporter*, by a writer who was required by the Office of Naval Intelligence to remain anonymous: "We have eighteen class hours a week, plus a weekly three-hour exam on Saturday morning. Most of us average at least six hours a day of outside preparation.—Classes are in five- or six-man sections. The schedule is divided into Reading, Dictation, and Conversation classes, and each class has six different teachers for the work (mostly native Japanese or Korean—[who] represent the highest type of Japanese-Americans), including one main reading teacher who covers the lessons in the textbook. The oral method is followed mainly, but we are bombarded by teaching from every angle. First, the reading teacher goes over the lesson and we learn by ear, then recite. The following hour, the dictation teacher will dictate to us at the board, where we are closely supervised. Next hour, we speak the language in conversation class, each student drilled individually. Our texts are based on the child-learning theory: that the child first learns a language through the ear, then through the mouth, and much later, consciously, through grammar forms."

Now, there is nothing radically new in this method; it is merely an extension of what is known among language-teachers as the Direct Method.

The chief difference is that the Navy can get from fifty to sixty hours of work weekly from its students, whereas we are lucky if we get nine (three in class, six in outside study). But this technique of heavy concentration in language-study had been previously recognized outside the armed forces and put into effect at some colleges and universities. Just after Pearl Harbor, the American Council of Learned Societies set up an Intensive Language Program "designed to provide, for possible use by government and private agencies, a group of Americans competent in the languages likely to be useful in winning the war and assuring the peace." The A.C.L.S. is primarily interested in training people in languages not generally taught in our colleges—Russian, Chinese, Japanese, Malay, Swahili, Arabic, etc., etc. In line with this scheme, The Johns Hopkins University, for instance, undertook to give intensive training in several languages under the following conditions (described to me by Prof. H. C. Lancaster): "A class should not have more than ten students. It should meet four *hours* a day, five days a week, plus, if possible, lunching at a language table. There should be at least three instructors, preferably four or more. If the course is in an ordinary language, two college years should be the prerequisite. The programme will stress spoken work, reports on newspapers, use of phonographs, etc." On Jan. 13, 1942, a special sub-committee, appointed to consider the feasibility and advisability of intensive language-training at the University of Texas, submitted a report which included the following recommendations 1) that the departments of foreign languages be encouraged to set up courses stressing oral work and the development of skill in the translation of periodical and documentary literature for military and "intelligence" purposes; 2) that the department of Romance Languages be authorized to introduce two sections of from ten to fifteen students each, meeting preferably six hours weekly, for intensive oral drill in Spanish, these sections to be open only to non-Spanish-speaking students with at least two years' previous preparation in the language and a B average in their courses in this language (this recommendation was accepted and the new course was instituted); 3) that the department of Germanic Languages be authorized to give a similar course as well as a course to prepare translators for government service and one in Military German and Elementary Conversation (these two latter courses were given this past year); and 4) that courses in conversational Russian be introduced (such courses are now being taught).

The most clear-cut recognition of the fact that language-teachers in this country do not succeed in training their students to *speak* the languages they study is to be found in the new "Course Leading to an M.A. in Linguistics for Teachers of Modern Languages" recently set up at Yale University. This course is described in a leaflet, "A Plan to Improve Elementary Instruction in Modern Languages," from which I shall quote a few relevant

passages. The leaflet first lays down what it takes to be self-evident propositions: that "many Americans have studied a modern European language for years and still can not use it for ordinary conversation"; that "communication between nations is made possible only by bilingual speakers" and that "the war has suddenly brought home to us the need for bilingual speakers"; that "it is precisely the earliest stage of our language teaching that is oftenest defective;" and that, finally, "it is not difficult to acquire fluency and reasonable accuracy in the use of a foreign language if you go about it in the sensible way." This "sensible way" subsumes four main requirements: 1) "It is essential to learn to speak before any attention is diverted to the traditional system of writing"; 2) A large proportion of the students' time must be devoted to this one task, at least for the first semester. Three-hour courses are utterly inefficient; maximum efficiency certainly can not be attained in less than eight hours a week in the classroom." 3) "The only safe way to learn a language is by direct imitation of a native speaker.—Since the process of imitation is highly personal, it is essential that native informants" (as these "speakers" are called) "meet the students in small groups (preferably about five to a group)." 4) If the native informant is not also a linguist, he "must serve only as a model. The teacher must be a trained linguist." (For those interested in a more thorough discussion of this method of learning a foreign language, I recommend a brochure, *Outline Guide for the Practical Study of Foreign Languages*, by Leonard Bloomfield, Sterling Professor of Linguistics at Yale University, published by the Linguistic Society of America. The new Yale course is apparently one of the first results of the publication of this brochure).

The relevance of this new Yale course to the problem of language-teaching at the University of Texas is open to some question. The course is intended for graduate students who are preparing to teach one or another of the foreign languages and who are, thus, in a position to concentrate on the task of learning to speak that language in the shortest possible time; to require undergraduates to devote eight of their fifteen weekly class-hours to language-study, even for only one semester, would, obviously, call for administrative readjustments of considerable complexity. And the course is based on the assumption that the primary aim of foreign-language study is the acquisition of fluency in speaking, an assumption that would necessitate sweeping changes in our system of teaching and entail enormous budgetary increases that administrative bodies would probably not be very eager to grant. The new course, however, does make it clear that modern language departments in other American universities are giving the problem very serious study and suggests that we at Texas ought to be doing likewise. This being the case, it would seem to me to be advisable that our modern foreign language departments should be empowered to set in motion machinery for the study of the following matters, among others:

1) The introduction of aptitude and placement tests for all students entering college with foreign-language units, with a view to absolving those capable of passing such tests from the necessity of taking any of our elementary courses and to enabling them thereby to proceed at once to advanced work in the language they have been studying or, if they so desire, to begin the study of another foreign language or to turn their attention to other fields. Students, for instance, who begin their study of Spanish in the grades and continue it through high school ought to be in a position to begin advanced work (real college work) in their freshman year.

2) The acceleration of the teaching and learning of beginning courses in foreign languages by the establishment of five- or six-hour courses in the freshman and sophomore years, with the emphasis on oral work, the teaching to be done in small sections and with the assistance, as far as possible, of native-born or foreign-educated "informants" who might have the rank of tutors in their respective departments.

3) The establishment of courses at all the necessary levels of French, German, and Russian stressing the reading of scientific materials, to meet the demands of science departments and science majors, and of similar courses designed for students planning to enter government service either at home or abroad.

This might be an opportune time, too, for our departments of modern foreign languages to formulate a specific set of objectives for their courses (including those at the elementary level) taken by students interested chiefly in the so-called "cultural" values to be derived from such courses. This will still remain one of our most important functions and must not be lost sight of in any rush to climb the "practical" bandwagon. The college must never forget that one of its primary purposes is to prepare its students to take their places as members of an educated and cultured citizenry; and, to repeat what I began by saying, I am convinced that a familiarity with the language and the intellectual and artistic achievements of some other nation than our own ought to be a part of the mental equipment of all members of such a citizenry. We must bend every effort toward the training of students in work of truly collegiate calibre, of young men and women possessed of a genuine ambition to read with understanding and enjoyment the masterpieces of foreign literatures or technical writings by foreign scholars in the languages in which they were originally composed. This would be a long step in the direction of the formation of a body of well-educated citizens, with an intelligent grasp of domestic and foreign affairs and a delicate sensitiveness to the beauty of the written and spoken word.



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## • Meetings of Associations •

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### CONSTITUTION OF THE NEW YORK STATE FEDERATION OF MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHERS

Adopted, October 16, 1943

- I. NAME—This organization shall be called "The New York State Federation of Modern Language Teachers," hereinafter mentioned as the Federation.
- II. PURPOSE—The purpose of the Federation shall be to promote the study of modern foreign languages and cultures and to increase active public interest therein.
- III. MEMBERSHIP
- Section 1. Any individual interested in the purposes of the Federation is eligible for membership.
- Section 2. TYPES—Categories of membership shall be
- a) Active
  - b) Junior
  - c) Associate
  - d) Affiliate
- Section 3. DEFINITION OF TYPES
- a) Active Member—Any individual actively engaged in the teaching of or research in the field of modern foreign languages and who subscribes to the *Modern Language Journal* or any of the specialized journals shall be eligible for active membership.
  - b) Junior Member—Any individual actively engaged in the teaching of or research in the field of modern foreign languages and who has paid the membership assessment as provided for in By-law II shall be eligible for Junior Membership.
  - c) Associate Member—Any other individual interested in modern languages and who subscribes to the *Modern Language Journal* shall be eligible for Associate Membership.
  - d) Affiliate Member—Any organized group interested in the purposes of the Federation may, upon favorable vote of the Board of Directors, become affiliated with the Federation.
- IV. OFFICERS
- Section 1. The officers of the Federation shall be a President, a First Vice-President, a Second Vice-President and a Secretary-Treasurer.
- Section 2. DUTIES—The duties of all officers shall be such as usually pertain to these offices or as may be delegated to them by the Board of Directors.
- Section 3. TERM OF OFFICE—The term of office of the President and of the two Vice-Presidents shall be for a period of two years. The term of office of the Secretary-Treasurer shall be for a period of four years. These officers may be re-elected, but the President may not serve more than two successive terms. All officers shall assume their duties immediately upon formal notification of election by the chairman of the Balloting Committee and shall hold office until their successors are chosen and notified.
- Section 4. Officers shall be elected in the manner specified in By-law IV.
- Section 5. The Board of Directors shall have the power to appoint officers to fill any unexpired term.



**V. BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Section 1. The Board of Directors shall consist of the officers of the Federation, the State Supervisor of Modern Languages, the National Delegate, and five members-at-large (to be known as Regional Directors), elected as specified in By-law IV.

Section 2. The term of office of the five Regional Directors shall be for a period of two years.

Section 3. The Board of Directors shall govern the Federation, and its actions shall be subject to review by the members of the Federation at the annual meeting.

Section 4. The Board of Directors shall have the power to name such special committees as it may deem expedient.

**VI. NATIONAL DELEGATE**

Section 1. A delegate to the Executive Committee of the National Federation of Modern Language Teachers shall be elected once every four years. This delegate may not serve for two successive terms. Balloting for the national delegate shall be held simultaneously with the election of the other officers. The delegate shall be ex-officio member of the Board of Directors and shall represent the interests of the State Federation on the Executive Committee of the National Federation.

Section 2. **ALTERNATE DELEGATE**—An alternate delegate shall be elected simultaneously with the national delegate. He shall attend the National Convention in the event that the national delegate cannot be present at this meeting. The term of the alternate shall be concurrent with that of the national delegate.

**VII. COMMITTEES**

Section 1. The following standing committees to serve for two years shall be appointed by the Board of Directors: Nominating Committee, Balloting Committee, Membership Committee, Auditing Committee, and Publications Committee.

Section 2. These committees shall be appointed by the Board of Directors, one member to be named Chairman, from the active membership of the Federation, except that the First Vice-President shall be Chairman of the Membership Committee and the Second Vice-President shall be Chairman of the Publications Committee.

Section 3. **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**. The Nominating Committee shall be composed of five members none of whom may be an officer or director of the Federation, and shall be chosen with due regard to geographical representation. The Nominating Committee shall present its slate of candidates to the Secretary-Treasurer at least two months before the annual meeting. This does not preclude write-in ballots.

Section 4. **BALLOTING COMMITTEE**. The Balloting Committee shall be composed of three members none of whom may be an officer, a director, or a member of the nominating committee. The Balloting Committee shall report its findings in writing to the Secretary-Treasurer not later than one week prior to the annual meeting.

Section 5. **MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE**. The Membership Committee shall consist of seven members. At the discretion of the Board of Directors, the Chairman of this Committee may be authorized to appoint additional members.

Section 6. **AUDITING COMMITTEE**. The Auditing Committee shall consist of three members. The committee shall examine the books prior to the annual meeting, and shall present its report at that time.

Section 7. **PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE**. The Publications Committee shall consist of five members. It shall be the duty of this committee to edit and distribute materials pertinent to the interests of the members of the Federation as the Board of Directors may deem expedient.

**VIII. ANNUAL MEETING**—There shall be at least one meeting per year known as the annual meeting; others may be called as occasion demands. The date and place of the annual meeting shall be fixed by the Board of Directors at least three months in ad-

vance. This meeting may be altered or cancelled for emergency reasons by vote of the Board of Directors.

- IX. AMENDMENTS—Amendments to the Constitution may be initiated upon petition by any eight active members. Such petition shall be addressed to the Board of Directors. The proposed amendment shall be included in the notification of the annual meeting addressed to the active membership. Such amendment shall be considered approved by a majority vote of the members present and voting at the annual meeting.

#### BY-LAWS

##### I. FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year shall run from January to January.

##### II. DUES

Section 1. Dues for active members shall be fifty cents per year. All active members must be subscribers to one of the following publications:

*The Modern Language Journal*  
*The French Review*  
*Hispania*  
*Italica*  
*The German Quarterly*

Only active members may have power to vote or hold office.

Section 2. Dues for junior members shall be fifty cents per year.

Section 3. Associate members shall pay a fee of two dollars and fifty cents per year, of which two dollars shall constitute a subscription to the *Modern Language Journal*.

Section 4. AFFILIATE MEMBERS. Organized groups shall become affiliated members upon petition when approved by the Board of Directors. No fee shall be charged and affiliation shall be considered permanent.

##### III. TREASURER

The treasurer shall receive all moneys and deposit same. He shall keep records of all transactions and shall present same for audit as provided for by the constitution. Any expenditure over five dollars (\$5) shall be authorized and voucher countersigned by the president. The treasurer shall be empowered to pay not to exceed \$5 traveling expenses for officers and directors on the occasion of special meetings.

##### IV. BALLOTING

Election of officers, board of directors, and delegates shall be handled by mail. Ballots shall be mailed to the active membership not later than six weeks prior to the annual meeting. Unsigned ballots and ballots received by the chairman of the balloting committee less than three weeks prior to the annual meeting shall be invalid. Ballots shall be bundled and sent by the chairman of the balloting committee to the secretary-treasurer at the time of reporting the results of the election. These ballots shall be kept on file until the next following annual meeting.

##### V. REPORTS AND MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Copy of all reports and minutes of proceedings shall be kept on permanent file by the secretary.

##### VI. IMPLEMENTATION

This constitution and by-laws shall be submitted to the membership for adoption no later than January 1, 1944 and the various provisions thereof shall become operative immediately upon adoption.

- VII. A copy of the Constitution and By-laws shall be sent to each new member upon his joining the Federation.

# RESOLUTIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION OF MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHERS OF PHILADELPHIA

November 11, 1943

*Editor, The Modern Language Association Journal.*

DEAR SIR:

At the first general meeting of the fall term, held at the Girls' High School in Philadelphia, on November fourth, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

"Whereas, We have lost Dr. Anthony Giulian through an untimely death; and

"Whereas, Dr. Giulian served as teacher and head of language department for many years; and

"Whereas, He promoted untiringly the cause of languages in Philadelphia; and

"Whereas, He was an individual of outstanding scholarship and character; and

"Whereas, He made all who came into contact with him aware of his sympathy and human qualities; and

"Whereas, He was a devoted father and husband; therefore be it

"Resolved, That the Modern Language Association express to his family their deep sympathy; and be it further

"Resolved, That a copy of the resolution be sent to the "Modern Language Association Journal"; and be it finally

"Resolved, That this resolution be recorded in the minutes of this meeting of the Modern Language Association."

Yours very truly,

ROSE BRUCKNER, *Secretary*

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## • Notes and News •

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### UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS NEWS SERVICE

NINE Mexican scholars, members of the faculty of the National University of Mexico, have been made "honorary professors" at the University of Texas. In recognition of their services to the Cooperative Field School of the University of Texas, held at the University of Mexico this past summer, the honorary professorships were recommended by the executive committee of the Institute of Latin-American Studies, and approved by the Board of Regents.

Mexican professors to whom the honorary professorships were extended are: PABLO MARTÍNEZ DEL RIO, director of the Summer School for Foreign Students; JUSTINO FERNÁNDEZ, research associate in the Institute of Aesthetic Research and professor of art; JULIO JIMÉNEZ RUEDA, director of the faculty of philosophy and letters; PAUL KIRCHHOFF, professor of anthropology; EZEQUIEL ORDÓNEZ, professor of engineering; RAFAEL RAMÍREZ, Mexican Minister of Education; JOSÉ RIVERA PÉREZ CAMPOS, professor of law; GUILLERMO HECTOR RODRÍGUEZ, professor of law; SILVIO ZAVALA, director of the Center for Historical Studies.

### AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF FRENCH NATIONAL INFORMATION BUREAU

#### *Foreign Languages as War Courses in N.Y. High Schools*

LAST April, the New York City Board of Superintendents announced that beginning this September, the fourth year of a foreign language (French, German, Italian, Spanish) would

have official standing as a war course in the public schools. "We are permitting pupils whose ability in a language indicates that they can achieve a high degree of competence in it to offer that subject as a war course, because of the possibility of their using their knowledge as interpreters," said Associate Superintendent Frederic Ernst of the High School Division.

At least 1000 pupils were estimated to be taking Fourth Year French this Fall.

#### *English and French Advocated as World Languages*

A UNITED PRESS dispatch from London (July 24) informs us that a committee of educational authorities representing the United Nations governments in exile (Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Greece, The Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Yugoslavia and the Fighting French) made the following four concrete recommendations: 1) That both English and French be introduced in the higher grades of the elementary schools in Allied countries as compulsory subjects 2) That the teaching of English be stressed in all schools 3) That only English and French be used in international meetings and conferences and 4) That all publications intended for international use be published either in English or French or be accompanied by substantial summaries in those languages. To prevent the arrangement from being one-sided, French would be taught in the elementary schools of the English-speaking countries.

#### *Foreign Languages and the First Year of the H. S. Victory Corps*

THE N.E.A. Research Division reveals that there has been a 10% (9.9) increased emphasis on foreign languages in the High Schools during the first year since Pearl Harbor. (Dec. 1941-Dec. 1942). If we interpret correctly the evidence we have since, we predict that foreign language study emphasis in the High Schools will have increased by at least 30% from Dec. 1942-December 1943.

### WISCONSIN CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF TEACHERS OF FRENCH AND FACULTY OF FRENCH DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN

MAY we all rise to the opportunity offered us by revived interest in our subject, and the trend of events abroad, and make the year count in the war effort and the preparation for post-war relations, and in broadening the intellectual horizons of our students.

Now is a moment when the material value of a training in French is more generally recognized, and the cultural values can be seen as permanent. Let us take advantage of this motivation and so adapt our teaching as to meet the new demands and lay the foundation which will be most useful for our students, both in knowledge and growing interest.

What can be said to the French teacher in a high school where French classes have been discontinued, either because of a drop in enrollment in the subject, the desire to introduce Spanish, or the pressure of pre-induction courses in mathematics, science or physical fitness? A pamphlet containing a study by Mr. Frank J. Klier on "Language Teaching in Wisconsin Public High Schools, 1941-1942" gives some helpful suggestions.

Mr. Klier points out some things that administrators and teachers can do: "If administrators and teachers, themselves, get clearly in mind just what the values of language are, they will be able to convey these to others and to make them clear to parents and pupils alike. . . . Languages are unique in that they do not concern only a part of a human being's life and experience; they give expression to life and experience, and therefore they concern the whole person. Thus, they cooperate with Social Studies, English, Speech, Art, Geography, . . . and others; that is, they cut across all departments and yet complement instead of competing with the others. . . . Languages, therefore, do not really duplicate one another; the student, in effect, adds a new world to his world of concepts with every new language he learns. Thus, he, himself, becomes more than the person he was. The ability, then, to speak and understand more

than one language is a possession to be prized. If administrators and teachers uphold such values and praise the students who have language opportunities at home, the treasures of foreign-speaking populations in America may be brought to light and given social standing, without, in the least, lessening the predominant standing of the American tongue."

### ANNOUNCEMENT

PUBLICATION in the Fall of 1944 of the COLUMBIA DICTIONARY OF MODERN EUROPEAN LITERATURE, the first complete record of recent and contemporary literature in all the countries of the European continent. There will be a general article on the literature of each nation and articles on individual authors and movements. The longest articles are on French and Russian literature.

### VOCATIONAL POSSIBILITIES OF MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES NOW AND IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD

THE RELATIVE value of a knowledge of a modern foreign language has been affected by the war, but it is reasonable to suppose that such training is even more important at present and will be more so in the post-war period.

At the present time, besides the value for men in the armed forces and auxiliaries who may be stationed abroad, the government has been seeking men and women with a good knowledge of foreign languages for service as translators in various fields, especially communications and censorship, and for work in occupied territory, both in the armed forces and in civilian posts of administration and rehabilitation. The latter will undoubtedly continue for an indefinite period, and would include:

- Medical work, nursing, hospital attendants, Red Cross, dietetics, sanitation

- Service centers of various kinds, welfare workers

- Distribution of supplies

- Administration, secretarial and clerical help

- Engineering, road and bridge building, transportation

- Interpreting

- Librarians

There is anticipated immediately after the war an immense development of airways, requiring agents, attendants, hostesses, business representatives, clerks and secretaries, familiar with the language and customs of the countries which the lines will touch. Later, travel bureaus.

International trade and finance, journalism and advertising, will need office workers and representatives, both at home and abroad, who have command of a foreign tongue.

Mining and other engineers, technical scientific experts in various fields, geology, botany, biology, chemistry, agriculture, will find openings in foreign countries.

In all these a knowledge of a modern foreign language should be valuable; for instance, French, not only for France and its numerous colonies, but in the Near East, South America, and in many places where French is spoken as the second language.

### WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING

THE BROADCASTS in French, intended especially for high school students, under the direction of Miss Germaine Mercier, will be continued this year over WHA, the State Station at Madison Wisconsin. The theme for this year is: "Lafayette Nous Voici." The programs will dramatize in dialogue form incidents in the lives of American soldiers overseas, particularly in North Africa. They will be based largely on authentic letters sent by former students in French, now in the armed forces. They will tell of the boys' experiences, meeting French people, going to the "Foyer du Soldat," shopping for souvenirs in the native quarters, etc.

Interesting Memorandum from Miss Marguerite Treille, Head of the Modern Language Department of Hood College, Frederick, Maryland.

This is the result of my inquiry in Washington about the necessity for intensive training in Foreign Languages, both for war work and post-war work.

I received this information from the State Department, the Department of Commerce and the Council of Learned Societies. I have two personal letters written by economists who have studied the situation and these letters are at your disposal.

The consensus of opinions is that:

(1) "American Colleges and Universities should begin to plan *now* for adequate training for women as well as for men.

"After the war there is likely to be a greatly increased need of College trained women with a good working knowledge of European languages (State Department)".

The Department of Commerce is even more emphatic in its statement.

"In preparing the long range plans for the most effective participation of American business in the post-war world, it is clear that the adequate language preparation of our students in college *must take high rank*."

(2) FOR WHAT WILL OUR LANGUAGE STUDENTS BE USEFUL, OUTSIDE OF TEACHING?

"All indications point to a variety of opportunities for the employment of such women abroad,—not only in governmental positions, but also in fields of foreign banking, communications, trade, and journalism. It is not unlikely that a number of postwar international agencies will be established to assist with economic and social reconstruction in Europe. Such agencies will doubtless require the services of a considerable group of young women skilled in one or more European languages, particularly French, German, Italian, Spanish or Russian."

(State Department)—Portuguese could have been added to the list.

"We must look forward to an immediate post-war picture in which huge air-liners will carry 185 persons in ten hours from New York to London or Paris at fares ranging up from \$100. Plans of this nature have already been hinted by Mr. Juan Trippe of Pan-American Airlines. This enormous increase in travel will inevitably and quite properly increase the profitable trade relations between the United States and the principal European export and import markets, to the benefit of both exporters and importers in both directions" (Department of Commerce).

(3) WHAT TYPE OF TRAINING?

Outside of the practical skills necessary to train:

a. Foreign secretaries (Travelling agencies, banks, embassies, consulates, American firms, etc.)

b. Journalists

c. Aviation Stewardesses

d. Dietitians

e. Nurses

f. Nursery school-teachers

g. Housing experts

A thorough knowledge of the language or languages chosen will be essential.

"It is obvious however, that the United States will not profit to the full from these opportunities suddenly opened up to us if we are lacking in an adequate supply of business personnel possessing a real understanding of the *language* and *culture* of these other nations. Mere speaking ability will not suffice—in fact, it will, if anything, be a serious hazard, particularly if the prospective foreign customer or client discovers that behind the speaking ability lies an abysmal ignorance of the literature and culture of the country with which the American desires to do business." (Department of Commerce)

(4) AGE LIMIT

Nobody spoke to me about an age limit. I was told it will not be a question of age but knowledge and ability. (The Red Cross, I believe, requires applicants to be at least 25)

Rehabilitation abroad will take at least two generations and even if applicants were re-



quired to be at least 25, our students will soon reach that age and will have a few more years, to get some experience in America first.

(5) COUNCIL OF LEARNED SOCIETIES

Mr. Cowan gave me much information by telephone. He was so outspoken in one of his statements that I told him I would not quote him, but he declared I could. He said anybody could see the great importance of the study of foreign languages and that they could not make a special campaign on each campus to enlighten "obtuse" Administrations.

He gave me these pointers:

a. The government prepares 20,000 men every nine months for the study of 30 foreign languages. (Foreign Area Studies)

b. On Monday June 21—the very day he talked to me—the government opened a training school for instructors in foreign languages at Madison, Wisconsin.

c. The same day, June 21, blank sheets were passed in every office to find out how many languages government employees could speak, understand, write and read.

d. When the International Food Parley met at Hot Springs, Virginia, foreign secretaries were pulled out of every office and the government could not find enough. Most of the delegates spoke French. French is still the language spoken by the elite in Europe. A young woman, although she did not know shorthand, was pressed to accept to help the situation (she knows French as well as English.) She was paid \$15 a day, plus expenses.

e. Mr. Cowan stated that girls who knew shorthand in foreign languages could get a \$5000 salary. (I believe, nevertheless, that they are the exception.)

Prospective students interested in languages and receiving good grades in the best high schools ought to be urged to go on with their study of foreign languages as well as Spanish.

I could go to speak to high school students in different towns if it does not interfere with my teaching. I have been invited to speak to high schools students in Washington next semester.

The laymen are getting more and more aware of the necessity of the study of languages and may awake the teachers yet. Here is part of an editorial from the *Charlotte Observer*:

"The prosecution of the peace and of the permanent maintenance of peace will necessitate the teaching of foreign languages. . . .

"The study of a language provides us with more than mere information about another people. The understanding of the language reveals also their manner of thinking. Information may be translated into English and provided in this manner, but the more subtle habits of thought are hidden in the language itself and cannot be translated. For this reason our schools must teach foreign languages and not merely translations of foreign writings."

In the *Saturday Evening Post* (July 17, 1943) there is a very interesting article entitled BOOM IN BABEL. Here are some of the most important ideas:

"Although language enrollments in American public schools have declined with total scholastic decline, and sometimes further, more adult Americans are studying more languages than they ever thought existed. . . .

"The boom is an outgrowth of the most disconcerting lesson Americans learned when they got into global war—that languages, as weapons, are second only to guns, planes, tanks and ships; that languages will be of No. 1 importance in winning the peace and reconstructing the postwar world. . . .

"This bullish trend in language study is a decided contrast to the American attitude in years before the war, when prophets cried that our lack of language skills was the weakest link in our armor. Then we accepted the jeremiads as just another sample of sounding off by academic gong ringers. It was a natural reaction of most of us conditioned to regard foreign languages as dishes cooked up by owl-eyed pedants to make school tougher for our kids. . . .

"The war has taught us the effectiveness of language as a weapon in radio and written propaganda. That, however is only a prong among many. . . .

"Language experts are needed to read native maps, military documents and frequently

letters found on the fallen enemy. Nothing can be overlooked in the check for vital information. . . . The Army and the Navy must have men versed in languages when they take over conquered territories, set up prison camps and quiz prisoners. . . .

"The most important single civilian agency attempting to supply adept linguists for the highly specialized needs is the American Council of Learned Societies, fountainhead of the most erudite brains in America. Having sensed the imperative need for languages, the council, with a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, (\$100,000) put into action what it calls an intensive language program. . . .

"But it is not only the needs of war that drive the council and other responsible agencies. When the last shell is fired the problems of peace will arise. Not only at the peace conference will the Americans require languages to lay the basis of a brighter new world. The renovation of war-ravaged Europe, the tremendously increased commercial relations and opportunities all over the globe will depend upon a medium, or rather media, for communication, and this means languages. The Columbia University Press in its *THE PLEASURES OF PUBLISHING* points out that "In the next fifty years Americans must learn to read and speak and write the languages of the world—all of them. Monolingualism is the beginning of isolationism. Bilingualism will not be enough. We must be polylingual-omnilingual."

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## • Correspondence •

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To the Editor of the *Modern Language Journal*:

The *Modern Language Journal* is a sort of beast of burden, bearing, so to say, "the iniquities of us all." Over the broad land, men and women in the language-teaching profession, when their thoughts turn to general language matters, are permitted to see on the horizon only one possible vehicle for the dissemination, circulation, propagandizing (call it what you will) of those thoughts, and that is the *Modern Language Journal*. There must be, at all moments of the day and night, big and little envelopes stuffed with professorial lucubrations wending their way to the devoted editor in Cincinnati.

But not all the contributions to the *Modern Language Journal* are general. A goodly percentage of them are quite specifically concerned with the things of one language only, and could just as well grace the pages of the specializing professional language journals, while on the other hand the latter shy at generalizing material. Surely something is wrong and inconsistent here.

Many contributors to the *Modern Language Journal* must have had experiences like mine. That is, they have been told by the editors of the specialist journals: "We have read your paper with interest, but regret to say that it does not quite fit our particular needs. We would suggest that you send it to the *Modern Language Journal*." But the question is always perplexing to the would-be contributor: With the influences of languages so intertwined, and their literatures so shot through with universals, just when should a contribution be sent to the one type of journal, and when to the other?

I find it difficult to understand, as I wrote you once before (February,

1943) why French, Spanish, Italian, German (and Portuguese will probably do it next) insist on having their cliques. I confess that I welcome the specialized reviews to my desk as warmly as I do the *Modern Language Journal*. Why should I not? They treat of the same vital interests. But I should greatly prefer one big volume of precious material embracing the values of them all.

I repeat that, so far as I can see, the *Modern Language Journal* is serving functions identical with those of the specializing modern-language reviews in the "professional" field. But unfortunately, as matters now stand, more is expected of it than, with its restricted subscription-income, it can adequately perform. Would it not be well then that all contributions from modern foreign-language teachers (not published in the "research" magazines) should go to one single language periodical? The latter should be mainly "professional," perhaps, although of course, in the nature of things, it would serve "scholarly" needs as well.

Such a journal, review, or magazine, would never need advertising, or propagandizing, and what is more important, would give all of us language instructors a single rallying center upon which to fasten our unified allegiance.

A. M. WITHERS

Concord College  
Athens, W. Va.

EDITOR'S NOTE: We welcome suggestions from our contributors and the members of the NATIONAL FEDERATION OF MODERN LANGUAGE TEACHERS.

The above letter is brought to the attention of our readers so that they may express their opinion as to the advisability of adding articles of literary and critical interest as well as contributions on methodology and the techniques of the modern language field.

We thank Professor Withers for his interest and his initiative in starting useful discussion on what may be a new departure in determining the choice of future contributions.

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## •      Reviews      •

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PITTARO, JOHN M., *Nuevos Cuentos Contados*. Boston: D. C. Heath & Company, 1942. Price, \$1.32.

This excellent reader for beginners, an alternate volume to *Cuentos Contados*, contains 35 short stories "in which real people are actors" and compatible with the age and interests of the adolescent student. As stated in the preface, the features of each story are "intriguing plot, an interesting medium of narrative, and a total absence of description," which should retain "the student's interest throughout and create a natural desire for more reading experience." Other qualities of the collection are "a wide scope of subject matter," "interrelated aspects which give a true picture of Hispanic American people," and "rich local color."

The stories vary in length from one to seven pages. They were selected as "favorites among a large number used in the classroom." Some of them are old favorites, but an appreciable number of them are new to American students. The outlines have been borrowed from Spanish

sources, and the stories retold in simple language "well within the vocabulary scope of the beginner in Spanish." This simplicity of language, combined with the intrinsic interest and frequent humor, make the book an unusually useful one as a first reader for high school or college students.

The tales are not arranged strictly in order of increasing difficulty, but the earlier, shorter stories are noticeably easy, verbs in the first eight being limited to the present tense. In the exercises, the vocabulary has been wisely restricted to the first 1000 words in Buchanan's *A Graded Spanish Word Book*. Following each story are numbered notes translating unusual words or idioms, a vocabulary listing words used for the first time, and a similar list of selected idioms introduced in the story.

The exercises include a *cuestionario, ejercicio de comprensión*, several types of vocabulary study, including exercises on cognates, synonyms and opposites, and drill on idioms. All of the exercises seem to accord well with the fundamental purpose of the book. If any general criticism is justified, it may well be that the exercises occupy a disproportionately large space in a book intended primarily for reading, since the stories themselves account for barely one hundred of the 237 pages of text. However, many teachers may find this abundance of prepared exercise material an especially valuable feature.

WALTER E. STIEFEL

*The University of Tennessee*  
*Knoxville, Tennessee*

GUZMÁN, MARTÍN LUIS, *El Aguila Y La Serpiente*. Edited by Moore, Ernest Richard. New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1943. Vocabulary and Notes. Price, \$1.65.

Professor Moore has done a masterly piece of editing in his edition of *El Aguila Y La Serpiente*. This has been a very difficult task but one that he has accomplished exceptionally well. He has had to reduce a very long discussion of the first three years of the Mexican Revolution to less than two hundred pages of text without omitting any essential material. Few editors would have been bold enough to undertake this. We had expected someone to edit another novel by the same author, *La sombra del caudillo*, as needing less reduction and having more of the typical novel in its makeup.

Professor Moore has said in his introduction:

"Among the writers of the revolution Martín Luis Guzmán stands out as a stylist by inclination, training, and office—a technician of the pen—with a privileged power of observation. *El aguila y la serpiente* is perhaps superior in technique and in artistic re-creation to all other writings on the Mexican Revolution."

We agree with Professor Moore's statement and feel that even though the text he has chosen lacks the interest arousing advantages that a typical novel would have, the excellence of the literature style, the fine portrayal of character, and the faithful picture of the early revolutionary days still make this an excellent text for advanced classes in Mexican or Spanish American literature. In spite of the excellent notes and the complete vocabulary, we should not recommend this as a text before the beginning of a third year course.

Some Mexicans will object to the pictures of cruelty and ruthlessness painted by the author, but it seems to us that Professor Moore has chosen these episodes in such a way that we see the heroic and noble sides of the Mexican character as well as the cruel and barbarous that must always be present if we faithfully depict a period of strife.

We predict a wide use of Professor Moore's very fine edition.

JAMES O. SWAIN

*University of Tennessee*  
*Knoxville, Tennessee*

ROGERS, PAUL P., *Invitation to Spanish*. Stackpole Sons, Harrison, Pa. 1943.

Acceptance of this "Invitation to Spanish" is urged by this reviewer for an enjoyable first year in the college classroom. However, like all foreign language grammars, it contains the traditional, basic material. *Invitation to Spanish* runs the gamut of grammar rules from the uses of the definite and indefinite articles to the sequence of tenses in the subjunctive. These rules, carefully yet briefly stated, are illustrated by well-chosen phrases or sentences. It is interesting to note that the author uses these model sentences as an occasion to introduce a new but practical vocabulary. Geographical and historical references as well as the now popular war and home front vocabulary are especially worthy of attention.

Each lesson of which there are twenty-five with a review after each group of five, consists of the grammar explanation and exercises for application and drill. The first exercise is intended as the reading material followed by questions for comprehension. Unfortunately, this reading material has been presented as an enumerated series of sentences. Whereas there may be a certain continuity in the passage, the numbers before each sentence spoil the effect of a story and give the impression of disconnected sentences and thoughts. In contrast to this treatment of the reading material, there is an additional reading exercise at the end of each lesson which appears, more fortunately, as an uninterrupted text. These passages are the highlight of the book because they give the student the type of material he needs in the world of today. Such subjects as radio broadcasting, air raids, war matériel and machinery, agriculture in war time and other war time subjects and especially the "Declaration of the United Nations" are some of the treats in store for those accepting the "Invitation to Spanish."

The usual appendix offering a tableau of the regular and irregular verbs and the Spanish-English, English-Spanish vocabulary lists, terminates this Spanish grammar for college use, a concise, simple yet practical and interesting presentation of the fundamentals of the Spanish language.

CYBÈLE POMERANCE

*New York University*

HOFACKER, ERICH and JENTE, RICHARD, *German Composition and Conversation. A First Book in Written and Spoken German*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1943. Cloth. Price, \$1.60.

This new and welcome addition to available textbooks for conversation classes lives up to the promise made by the authors in the title. The systematic review, presented with many examples in the first eighteen of the book's twenty lessons, covers the essentials of grammar; the German texts, carefully graded according to difficulty, are simple enough in the early lessons to serve any Beginning Conversation class; the English texts follow the German models very closely, having as aids for translation occasional hints to the students, or references to the Summary of Grammar; the German and English texts of each lesson are divided into two parts, section B offering additional material for the better students, or making it possible for the teacher who chooses to use the material as separate units; finally, each lesson contains a list of the idioms used, and all the words occurring in the selections not among the 1018 most common in the A.A.T.G. list.

Lesson XIX presents material in both languages based on *Die Judenbuche* by Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, and the last lesson discusses Albrecht Dürer in English as translation subject-matter. Hereupon follows a free-composition section of ten topics, in which the necessary words for the suggested essays are listed. Then come *Fragen* for the eighteen lessons, a 54-page Summary of Grammar, German-English and English-German vocabularies (which apparently wish to be complete, though this is not stated), and, finally, a Grammatical Index.

Teachers of German, I am sure, will find this book very much to their liking. The material is interesting and offers a representative cross-section of popular German tales and anecdotes



ranging from the typical humorous story about the absent-minded professor or the naïve but shrewd peasant, to the serious sketch dealing with some famous historical event or personage. A very welcome and modern feature is the "Free Composition" section, which is in line with latest trends in textbooks of this type and presents an excellent opportunity for the student to venture forth into deeper water, so to speak, without the aid of any "textual wings."

A few typographical errors were noticed in the perusal of the book: an "er" occurs instead of an "es," p. 71; a comma is omitted after a date, p. 80; Droste of Annette von Droste-Hülshoff is spelled with an umlaut and the hyphen is missing, p. 93; the twentieth lesson is not numbered, p. 96; and a "Dir" and a "Du" are written small though in a letter, p. 103. In addition, however, to satisfy the taste of some teachers and students it might have been advisable for the authors to vary somewhat more the subject-matter of the initial lessons, inserting material here and there more definitely reflecting the experiences of the students. Moreover, a slightly slower pace in the rate of increase in difficulty might have been desirable. Then, a few items in the otherwise excellent grammar review might have been treated more fully or clearly. For example, the distinction between "es gibt" and "es ist" should, perhaps, have been explained more exhaustively and illustrated more effectively with additional exemplifications, p. 71; and the prohibition of the use of the past subjunctive in the conclusion of conditions contrary to fact unless this form differs from the past indicative, p. 81, seems somewhat too strong. Perhaps it would have been sufficient to warn the student to avoid the past subjunctive under such conditions.

These few points, however, are certainly not serious; they may even be largely a matter of personal opinion. Most assuredly they do not detract from the excellence of the book, which is undoubtedly destined to win many friends.

ULAND E. FEHLAU

*University of Cincinnati  
Cincinnati, Ohio*

JOHNSTON, AMES, *German Military Science. A Book of Readings.* New York: The Macmillan Company, 1943. Price, \$2.00.

This reader contains seven selections from representative German publications in the field of military science, preceded by a brief but adequate introduction and followed by a selective German-English vocabulary. Its merit lies in the fact that it makes original German sources available for group study in advanced reading courses at a time when the sources themselves are not obtainable in sufficient quantity.

The reading matter comprises a searching and still modern analysis of Battle, written about 1829 by Karl von Clausewitz; a factual account of the battle of Leuthen; an appraisal of Moltke's personality and contribution to military thought; and discussions covering such subjects as theory versus practice in the art of war, total war, National Socialist soldierdom, and aerial warfare. With the exception of the first-mentioned item, the material was written by prominent contemporary Austrian and German army officers and scholars. Thus the book, taken as a whole, offers an insight into the intellectual foundations of the National Socialist war-machine and its methods of warfare and training of military personnel.

The selections, carefully chosen and skilfully abridged, offer variety in contents and style. Occasional diagrams taken over from the sources enliven the text, and footnotes give needed information about names and other matters of fact. There are practically no detailed descriptions calling for a specialized military vocabulary, but the text has all the earmarks of difficult non-fictional German prose; that is to say, it is full of intricate constructions and involves a rather large general vocabulary, frequently with word usages not easily gleaned from dictionary meanings. Familiarity with military matters is no prerequisite, nor will it help the reader materially in the analysis of the text; but a thorough basic knowledge of German, certainly a minimum of five semesters of a college course, is indispensable.



The unsatisfactory part of the book is the German-English vocabulary, which needs thorough revision if it is to be of any use to the student. In such a revision, adjustments would have to be made with regard to the following points: (1) Gross errors of translation are found in the following entries: "Anschlagsart *f.* posted records" instead of "(type of) firing position" (cp. p. 86, l. 13), "dafürstehen *irreg. v.* stop at" instead of "be worth while" (cp. p. 18, l. 20), "dahinstehen *irreg. v.* be beside the point" instead of "be uncertain" (cp. p. 99, l. 15), "genügsam *adj.* competent" instead of "frugal" (cp. p. 30, l. 7), "lässig *adj.* neglected" instead of "neglectful" (cp. p. 64, l. 17), "Zollstock *m.* signpost" instead of "(folding) yardstick" (cp. p. 73, l. 4). (2) In many instances the English rendering is just inaccurate enough in shade of meaning to convey a wrong idea, for example "hochgebildet *adj.* highly trained" instead of "highly educated" (cp. p. 26, l. 21). (3) Technical terms are frequently not rendered precisely. Thus "Ausschuss" is annotated on page 7 as "frontal approach" but should be rendered as "(open) field of fire." (4) The English connotation is often not detailed enough to cover reasonably well all occurrences in the text. For example, "gelten *sv.* be regarded" needs amplification. (5) A few German words are listed incorrectly, such as "Schützengrab *n.* rifle pit, trench" instead of "Schützengraben *m.*" (6) There are some errors in grammatical annotation, as in the case of "heranschaffen" and "verschaffen," which are weak verbs and not strong verbs.

If proof is needed as to the total number of entries needing revision, an analysis of the first page of the text alone will show that the words "zeitigen," "geradezu," "Geibiet," "betrauen," and "Eigenschaft" have incorrect or inadequate renderings.

Unquestionably a careful revision of the vocabulary would add much to the merits of the book. It would bring it within reach of more students, save both students and instructors a great deal of effort, and make for more rapid progress.

Typographical errors in text and vocabulary are mostly inconsequential. Only the following need to be mentioned since they might cause difficulties to the student: "Kriegskunft" (p. VII) should be "Kriegskunst"; "fördern" (p. 12, l. 20) should be "fördernd"; "Gesechshandlung" (p. 22, l. 17) should be "Gefechtshandlung"; "Voretil" (p. 71, l. 9) should be "Vorteil"; "umgekehr" (p. 90, l. 16) should be "umgekehrt"; "panzerverbrechend" (p. 137) should be "panzerzerbrechend." The French passage on pages 19 and 20 and its translation need overhauling.

FRITZ TILLER

U. S. Military Academy  
West Point, New York

ERRANTE, GUIDO, *Sulla Lirica Romanza delle Origini*. New York: S. F. Vanni, 1943. 440 pp.

The thesis defended in this book is that Romance lyric poetry, which irradiates from Provence, is the gradual and slow development of Latin and Medieval literature, due essentially to the tradition of the Latin schools and the Church. It is a thesis which has been gaining favor in the last years, witness this passage of Luigi Russo in *Romana*, 2 (1938), p. 143: "La nuova poesia dei trovatori, oggi si dice, ha la sua origine dalla cultura classica ed ecclesiastica del chiericato, e non dal popolo. Il popolo non esiste, se non come vaga metafora, e la poesia e la letteratura non nasce mai dall'ignoranza." Dr. Errante's merit is of course that he attempts a thorough<sup>1</sup> demonstration of this thesis, with splendid first hand information, a wonderful bibliography, and—what matters most—a sound and clear method for dissecting ideas.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also Bertoni, *Romana*, 2 (1938), p. 203: "Lo splendore della latinità classica vinceva e relegava nell'ombra la fioca luce di quella medievale, che si riteneva essere sopra tutto scolastica, giuridica, liturgica, tutta una cultura riservata ai dotti, al clero, ai notai, ai giuristi. Vittime di questo preconconcetto, durato per tutto un secolo, sino al Paris, vittime di questa ancora lacunosa e imperfetta cultura sul [sic!] Medioevo, i grandi romantici dell'età gloriosa dell'idealismo germanico non poterono cogliere i legami vivi e profondi che allacciavano latino e volgare e non videro al di sotto di queste due apparenti culture, una sola ed unica cultura,

The author carefully analyzes the theories which have been proposed on the origin of Romance lyric poetry, and discards after thorough examination, those which he considers unsatisfactory. He expands a great deal in the study of the so-called "popular" theory. This originated in Germany and is of course closely connected with Romanticism and generally with the German ideas exalting the "soul of the people" and the ingeniousness, natural simplicity and spontaneity of the people, the true source of poetry. These theories, Errante says, are fundamentally nationalistic; they always reach in a more or less disguised way the conclusion that true poetry is Germanic. The author defends his point at great length and goes through the works of most of the great German thinkers—Wolf, Herder, Shelling, Hegel, the brothers Grimm, Lachmann, etc. He then comes to the conclusion that Croce is right in denying the validity of such a definition as "popular," that a clear concept of what "popular" means has never been attained, and cannot be attained.<sup>2</sup> This notwithstanding, several French (Paris, Jeanroy, Fauriel) and Italian scholars (Gorra, Rubieri, Nigra, d'Ancona) tried to use this concept in the study of the origins of Romance lyric poetry. They had thus to suppose the existence of a "popular" poetry in "Vulgar" in the early Middle Ages (pp. 50 ff.; 60; 92; 130 ff.; 148), a poetry of which we have no texts, and the existence of which remains therefore purely hypothetical. Sicilian lyric poetry is not "popular" at all (pp. 100 ff.; 130 ff.); it is under the strong influence not of French, but of Provençal lyric poetry, which is not "popular" either (pp. 122 ff.).

The so-called "classical" theory, such as it has been presented by a few scholars (pp. 165 ff.), also fails to explain the origin of trobadoric lyric poetry. This shows a certain influence of Virgil (p. 166), and of course of Ovid, as it is well known, a preferred poet during the Middle Ages (pp. 167 ff.). But the Provençal spirit of courteous love is as far removed as anything can be from Ovid's crude and epicurean verses (p. 169); even when the words seem to coincide, the soul of these two types of poetry is quite different (pp. 187 ff.).

The stream which leads to Romance lyric poetry, says Errante in Chapter VI, starts from some verses of Petronius, shines here and there in the prose of Fronto and Apuleius, then through Lactantius (Carmen de Phoenice), Prudentius, St. Ambrose and the poets of the Anthologia, reaches in the VI century Venantius Fortunatus, who constitutes the bridge to the mystic lyric poetry of the late Middle Ages. He is fundamentally a poet of the school, and essentially a Latin (p. 217); he openly opposes the "barbaric," that is to the Germanic world, in which he feels himself "an exile" (p. 218). Dr. Errante rejects Allen's idea that Romance lyric poetry is the result of a synthesis of the Roman tradition "with Gothic and Frankish ideals of taste" (*The Romanesque Lyric*, 1928). He equally denies any strong influence of Arab poetry through Spain (pp. 269 ff.). He does not exclude the possibility either of some Germanic or Arab element; but he denies that this may have been either decisive, or even important in the formation of the new poetry.

The study of the origins of the "forms" of Romance lyrics, which occupies Chapters

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un solo mondo latino e volgare insieme, che si manifestava in due forme diverse." And on p. 206: "Ritengo poi che, più stretti che con la poesia classica, siano i vincoli tra poesia latina medievale e poesia romanza."

But Errante's conclusions are more precise and clear on the whole problem than Bertoni's, and he gives the careful demonstration of a thesis which Bertoni merely formulates, or little more.

<sup>2</sup> G. Bertoni, ravished lately to our beloved studies, expressed quite similar ideas on this particular subject in an article, "*Le origini della poesia romanza nel pensiero dei romantici tedeschi*," *Romana*, 2 (1938), p. 202 (an article which Dr. Errante obviously knew not, for, careful as he is, he does not mention it): "Ciò che colpisce nelle teorie dei romantici è questo continuo rifarsi al popolo. Si direbbe che per essi, prima della poesia epica e lirica volgare, nulla, proprio nulla esistesse, e che per un miracolo essa sia sorta, in momenti felici, su dalle profondità dell'anima della nazione, senza antecedenti tecnici, e senza elaborazione riflessa. Un mistero rivelatosi improvvisamente, o quasi, dal nulla. Ora, qui sta l'errore delle teorie romantiche."

VIII and IX of the book, leads him again, through another channel, to the same conclusion: the Romance metric, although based on quite a different principle than the classical, is however its natural development, elaborated through Church tradition. He therefore arrives at the same result as U. Ronca, *Metrica e ritmica latina nel Medio Evo* (1890), that is: "Tutti i più notevoli fenomeni della nuova versificazione [...] trovano una larga preparazione nell'antica poesia, e si sviluppano dalla metrica, di cui sono deformazione" (p. 288). On p. 293, I fail to find the mention of E. Fraenkel's important book, *Iktus und Akzent* (Berlin, 1928); cf. the favorable criticism of G. Pasquali, in *RFIC*, 8 [1930], pp. 157 ff.<sup>3</sup> As to what Dr. Errante says on pp. 293 f. on the coincidences between "grammatical" and "metrical" accent, I would like to recall my remarks in *Emerita*, 3, 1935, pp. 169 f., which met the approval of Prof. C. Merlo in *Italia Dialettale*, 12, 1936, p. 88. Particularly the rhyme, in its different forms, is quite frequent in the Latin poetry of the Middle Ages, in the Leonine verses, or in

altus mons, firmus pons, libera frons, vitreus fons

and similia (of which a beautiful example is the inscription of St. Paul's cloister in Rome—cf. *Archivio della Società Romana di Storia Patria*, 44, 1921, pp. 269 ff.). We find rhymes already in Commodianus and Augustine, a fact which excludes the Arab or Celtic origin (p. 296). However, a certain influence of the characteristic biblical style of parallelism may perhaps be admitted, it seems to me, since the author stresses all the time—with full right—the importance of the Church in the transmission of Latin lore to the new world. And in effect Chapter X (pp. 360–437) deals exclusively with the sources of the Provençal poet Marcabru: these are essentially the Old and the New Testament. But even when the poet does not directly imitate the Sacred Books, he moves in an ecclesiastical, monkish sphere of thought; he frequently reminds the reader of a sermon. It is very interesting to notice that Errante's main conclusions lead us to the result that Romance lyric poetry develops from a pure Latin soil, with little or no Germanic influence; this reminds us strangely of a similar transformation in the ideas of historians on the origins of Feudalism, which was also formerly attributed to the Germanic people, whereas modern scholars (as Salvemini and others) find its roots in Roman history and in late Roman conditions of life.

Some readers may judge that I have given a rather dry and bony abstract of this book, a sort of catalog of contents; but I think I have done thereby a service to the reader and to the author, indicating the main line of the latter's thought and demonstration. This is a wonderful book, well thought out, based on an enormous amount of reading, on a careful study of the sources—especially Provençal and Sicilian—and the Latin poetical literature of the Middle Ages; it would be really too bad if it passed unnoticed in America, where books such as these are very much needed. But this danger exists, first, because the book is in Italian, a language which unfortunately not every scholar masters; second, because it does not always make easy reading. It is not always possible to find one's way quickly through the dense forest of scholarship with which the author strengthens his demonstration.

Dr. Errante's book follows essentially Croce's method of aesthetic interpretation, a definite and on the whole quite healthy reaction to the former positivistic approach, which still dominates in many European and American universities. I would not deny that sometimes Croce's followers have gone a little too far, and that their works present a new sort of rhetorical and useless verbiage; still, Croce's fundamental assumption that the art of a given period can be understood only by a deep feeling of its aesthetic conceptions, of its spiritual form, seems to me the only possible approach to the spirit itself of literary problems. And this is Errante's method: that is what makes his book a real masterpiece of modern scholarship, a work which synthesizes a full knowledge of facts and sources with fine taste and a delicate appreciation of aesthetic values. Those two qualities are not easy to find each by itself; it is

<sup>3</sup> Cf. also the very important article of the same author, *Die Vorgeschichte des Versus quadratus*, in *Hermes*, 62, 1927, pp. 357–370.

extremely rare to see them harmoniously blended in the same book, and cooperating toward the same aim of scholarly research. It is a sound, serious, but also deeply suggestive book. It is a work which tackles successfully, it seems to me, one of the most difficult problems of literary history, and deserves to be read with extreme attention not only by the scholars of this field, but also by every man who has an interest in the mysterious, fascinating problem of the origins of our modern culture.

G. BONFANTE

Princeton University  
Princeton, N. J.

PAYRO, ROBERTO J., *Sobre las ruinas*. Edited by Jones, C. K., and Alonso, Antonio. Boston: D. C. Heath & Co., 1943. Vocabulary and Notes. Price, \$1.00.

Professors Jones and Alonso have provided us with an excellently edited Argentine play in *Sobre las ruinas*. The editors have decided, very wisely it seems to us, to put the notes at the bottom of each page. These notes are complete enough to make this an acceptable text for second semester second year college classes. It would seem better, however, to study this in a more advanced class, for example, any third year class especially one dealing with Spanish American literature. In those universities giving courses specifically in Argentine literature, this text will be exceptionally valuable. Although the theme in this play is quite similar to that of *La gringa*, the love intrigue being stronger, the students of college age are likely to find the story itself more interesting. After using this play in a third year literature course, we feel that we can recommend it without reservation either as an introduction to realistic Argentine literature or as an additional text which will give the student at insight into language and life of the Plata River region.

JAMES O. SWAIN

University of Tennessee  
Knoxville, Tennessee

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## • Books Received •

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### FRENCH

Havens, G. R., and Moore, O. H., *A Travers les Ages*. Henry Holt & Co. 1943. Price \$2.20.  
Martin, Charles F. (Major) and Russell, George M. (Major), *At West Point—A French Reader and Review Grammar*. D. C. Heath & Co. 1943.

### RUSSIAN

Yugow, A., *Russia's Economic Front for War and Peace*. Harper & Bros. 1942. Price \$3.00.

### SPANISH

Alpern, Hymen and Martel, José, *Military Language Manual* (Spanish-English). Gregg Publishing Co. 1943.